The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. XLVII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 1926 NUMBER 608

Contents

The Week 264

Editorials

Toward a Farm Program 267
Mexico and the Catholics 268
America's War Responsibility 270

General Articles

G. B. S.: The Father of the Flapper ..... Eunice Fuller Barnard 272
The Corn Belt's Next Move ..... Donald R. Murphy 274
Confessions of a Concert Singer 276
Summer Revues ..... Edmund Wilson 279
Variety ..... Evelyn Gerstein 280

Correspondence 282

Reviews of Books

Propaganda and Counter-Propaganda ..... G. Lowes Dickinson 284
Education: the Antidote for Social Disorders ..... Eduard C. Lindeman 285
Human, All Too Human ..... Paul Weiss 286
A Japanese Woman's Autobiography ..... Elsie Weil 286
Walt Whitman ..... Lewis Mumford 287
Halide Edib, Heroine ..... E. E. 288
A New Oasis ..... Hudson Strode 289
Innocent Birds ..... J. W. G. 289
Keller's Anna Ruth ..... D. B. W. 289

The Week

AS THE game of governmental leapfrog goes on in France, one Premier succeeds another so rapidly that it is difficult to express comment on the plans of a new Cabinet before it is gone. With the criticism of Caillaux's program expressed by Herriot we are in general agreement. It would have been worse than futile to try to stabilize the franc by means of foreign loans before domestic revenues equalled expenditures. To have done so would have put French gold and resources in pawn without saving the currency. If the franc is to be stabilized at all, it must be done by internal sacrifices. We also sympathize with Herriot's opposition to the Mellon-Berenger debt settlement, which cannot be carried out and had better be frankly repudiated than disingenuously accepted. Concerning the proposed measures of internal reform we are more doubtful. It seems hardly likely that any higher tax rates would bring forth a larger yield. This doubt applies as well to a capital levy as to any other form of taxation. Furthermore the Herriot government is probably too weak to carry either the capital levy or the more practical proposal of reducing the interest rate on the internal debt. It was not the left alone which overthrew Briand and Caillaux; essential aid came from those who used the Finance Minister's war record against him and would be the last to support Herriot's financial plans. Hope for the franc seems to be flickering, while hope for those who want to substitute something else for representative parliamentary government is flaring brighter.

THE Belgian franc has suffered partly in sympathy with the French and partly from the disorder of internal finances. It was an heroic measure to save it which gave to King Albert dictatorial powers over financial matters—powers which the French Chamber would not grant to Caillaux. Whether this measure will be sufficient remains to be seen, but it looks now as if the Belgians had guarded themselves against twin dangers—on the one hand the danger of falling too deeply into the hands of Anglo-American bankers in their financial distress, and on the other hand the danger of an unconstitutional Fascist dictatorship. Fortunately King Albert is a popular monarch who can be trusted to safeguard the future of representative government and the welfare of his people.

SECRETARY MELLON as a letter writer seems to have no talent except to convince those who are already in agreement with him. His recent letter on the war debt settlements has inflamed British and French opinion against us just as his letter against the Haugen bill irritated the farmers. He has a supreme gift for complete and innocent misapprehension of his opponent's point of view. It is true, as he says, that many of the loans were extended after the Armistice, and that of these large portions were used for purposes not directly connected with the War, but for the peace-time benefit of the nations concerned. It is true that the terms of payment arranged are such that one can, if he wishes, calculate that only the post-war debts are being paid at a higher rate of interest, rather than the whole debts at a lower rate. Yet the crucial

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fact is that whatever is to be paid, and at whatever rate of interest, the burden is heavy and in some cases impossible for populations not used to paying interest on foreign loans and plagued with post-war confusion. And these nations are quite conscious that the bulk of the loans was spent in the United States, to the immediate benefit of American industry. Did the United States mean all she said about sacrifice to aid the noble cause of the Allies, or did she not? Meanwhile those Congressmen who were told that the war debts were being paid to the full capacity of the debtors will be unpleasantly surprised to hear that only the post-war debts, not the war debts, have been funded.

THE Republican politicians who are making frantic attempts to keep prohibition out of politics from now until 1928 are not getting much help from Senator Borah. His speech at Augusta, Ga., before the Protestant Ministers' Association will have the opposite effect. True, he told the ministers that what is needed is to take prohibition out of the political arena, but in the next breath he declared that if the Republican and Democratic parties will not face the issue squarely, a third party is needed which will. Are we to suppose that Mr. Borah would be found at the head of such a party, despite his refusal to come off the reservation in such years of temptation as 1912 and 1924? He was particularly bitter against referenda in the various states, and New York in particular, looking toward a modification of the Volstead law. The only way to change the existing condition of affairs, he insists, is by repealing the Eighteenth Amendment; action by the various states is "an attempt to construe the Constitution separately," which is nullification, which is "the slinking, silent, cowardly sapping of the very foundation of all order, all dignity, all government, the furtive, evasive betrayal of a nation."

SENATOR BORAH has, it will be noted, taken the orator's liberty of going behind what his opponents say they want to what he thinks they really want. We agree with him that as a matter of fact, the wets desire real liquor and not some hybrid which has more than one half of 1 percent alcohol but is still non-intoxicating. We agree with him further in saying that prohibition has not been sincerely enforced, and that the playing of politics by Congressmen and others is largely responsible for the failure. He has here put up a clear-cut issue to his friends, the drys, which they cannot very well evade. When he calls the New York state referendum nullification, however, he is looking into the future and predicting results from it for which there is no justification on the face of facts. Such hard words should not be uttered unless accompanied by some sort of reasonable evidence that they are true. Also, the geographical scene of his assault upon nullification was not the happiest. For the South has been for generations the scene of nullification of other amendments to the federal Constitution which, however regrettable, have never called from Senator Borah himself the resounding epithets he used last week. It makes a difference, evidently, how near to your heart is the amendment which is to be nullified.

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE'S vacation does not consist entirely of catching fish which either are or aren't pike, and of being visited by mosquitoes and Al Smith. Last week Senator Cummins, who kept cool with Coolidge until he was frozen out in the Iowa primaries, issued a statement which can't have contributed much to the gaiety at Paul Smith's. Mr. Coolidge will not be a candidate in 1928, declared the veteran from Iowa. By that time he will "have had enough of it." Moreover, Republican control of the Senate, such as it is, is likely to disappear next November. This prophecy is gleefully corroborated from the Democratic side of the fence, by Franklin D. Roosevelt. He predicts a Democratic Senate and perhaps a Democratic House this autumn. As we go to press, the corn belt conference is about to meet in Des Moines, a conference which, it is generally supposed, will give further impetus to the already well launched 1928 Presidential boom of Frank O. Lowden, late Governor of Illinois and spokesman for the unhappy farmer. As we said a fortnight ago, it is well not to jump to hasty conclusions about the declining prestige of Mr. Coolidge. At the same time, the portents are thickening in number until it is impossible for anyone to ignore them.

THE actions of Col. Carmi Thompson are rapidly passing the limits of decency. Sent to the Philippines as President Coolidge's personal representative to investigate conditions there, he has from the moment of landing made himself an outspoken and obnoxious propagandist against independence and in favor of turning the islands into a source of supply for American rubber. He has issued statements of this character in an almost daily stream, his latest feat being to make a speech urging upon a joint session of the Philippine legislature the desirability of establishing a rubber industry. Seemingly he did not make much impression upon the legislators. They know that once vast American investments have been made in rubber plantations all prospect of freedom will go glimmering. Colonel Thompson suggests that if the islands are ever set free the Philippine government should buy the rubber industry. This is about like suggesting to the workingmen of Pittsburgh that they buy the U. S. Steel Corporation. The legislators know, moreover, that labor is at present lacking for the proposed rubber plantations. Many thousands of workers would need to be imported from somewhere, with all the social and racial problems which would follow such a policy. The legislature answered Colonel Thompson by adopting a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unanimous joint resolution which demanded immediate and complete independence. We wish President Coolidge would answer him by ordering him either to go to work or come home. Or is the worthy Colonel doing merely what he was sent out for?

THE Americans who are behind Colonel Thompson are cleverly playing off the Mohammedan Moros against the Christian Filipinos. The Moros, who constitute a twelfth of the total population, have been told that if the islands are set free they will be subjected to religious persecution. Frightened by this, some of them have expressed their willingness to embrace the lovely plan of Representative Bacon of New York, for a separte Moro state to remain under the control of the United States when the rest of the archipelago is set free —if it ever is. The Moro districts are well adapted to the growing of rubber. The idea of setting the two elements in the population against one another is an ingenious one; but we doubt whether it will prove efficacious. In the long run the Moros are likely to decide that they have more in common with the Filipinos than they have with Americans whose burning desire is to acquire their land and put them to work on it.

IN THE New Republic for July 7, we told the remarkable story of Russell Tremain. Russell is a nine-year-old boy in Bellingham, Wash., whose parents belong to a rigid, not to say fanatical, religious sect, the Elijah Voice Society. One of the tenets of this organization is denial of all authority save that of God. The Tremains therefore refused to let their son salute the flag in school, a ceremony which is obligatory under a state law. The school would not permit Russell to attend without saluting the flag, so he stayed at home. Thereupon a court order was obtained to permit the legal kidnaping—we do not see how any other term can be applied to it—of Russell. Since our comment on this case was published, word has been received that the court action has been made permanent. Judge W. P. Brown of the Superior Court has ruled that Russell is to be kept in the care of the Washington Children's Home, until a "Christian family" can be found which will adopt him. Russell is now and has been for some time in the Children's Home. He is required to salute the flag daily, and the worthy Judge Brown has announced that anyone advising him to do otherwise will be haled up for contempt of court.

RUSSELL'S parents have refused to take any legal steps in opposition to Judge Brown's action. Though they are reliably reported to be normally affectionate parents, and to feel their situation keenly, they will not voluntarily have anything to do with man-made courts. Therefore it seems unlikely that any attempt to rescue Russell will be made. So far as we can learn, public opinion in Bellingham agrees with that of Judge Brown, who said in court, as reported in the columns of the local press:

> The father and mother admit, as stated, that they refuse to allow their son Russell to salute the flag and will not send him to school if the son is required to salute the flag of our common country.
>
> If such an act on the part of the parents is not placing the child in danger of growing up to lead an idle, dissolute and immoral life, then I am unable to understand what would be.

We invite our readers to make their own comment on this doctrine. If we expressed our opinion with adequate vigor, this issue of the New Republic would be in some danger of being declared unmailable.

SOMEONE bobbed up in London the other day and repeated an old and excellent suggestion that paintings ought to be rented as well as sold. There are thousands of persons who would be glad to have the work of contemporary artists in their homes if they could afford it. They cannot, or feel they cannot, buy a picture outright, but they can afford to pay 6 or 8 or 10 percent of its value for a year's rental. At the end of that time they might find they had grown so attached to the painting that they would somehow get together the price; or they might send it back and try something else for a year. In either case artists who now find it difficult to sell their work would at least be deriving some sort of income from it; pictures which are in storage would be hung where people could look at them; and homes which are now innocent of modern originals, or any other sort, would have some. In London an appeal has been made for money with which to establish a central renting bureau.

IT IS not a startling discovery announced by the National Industrial Conference Board that large plants produce more per worker employed than smaller ones. Naturally the large plant usually has the resources to command more and better machinery, fuller control over markets, and more highly skilled management. It can also exercise interior economies arising from the very fact of mass production. Yet the announcement ought to be met by several queries. The productivity figures are expressed not in tons or physical units of product, but in dollars of value produced. In other words they are dependent not only on the quantity turned out but on the selling prices of the products. It is just possible that in some cases a monopoly position which enables the large firm to charge higher prices may be a factor here. Also, it cannot be inferred that the larger the plant the greater the productivity, without limit. It is the experience of many managements and investigators that the advantages of size become dissipated in confusion and remoteness of contact after a certain point is reached.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Toward a Farm Program

AS REPRESENTATIVES from mid-western agricultural states are meeting in Des Moines it is uncertain what immediate direction their revolt will take. Ex-Governor Lowden may derive support for a Presidential boom; the Democrats may succeed in canalizing the corn-growers' disappointment into tariff reform agitation, or as Mr. Donald R. Murphy of Wallace's Farmer suggests in this issue of the New Republic, their favorite export dumping plan may be retained and combined with a plea for low tariffs on manufactured goods, reliance for enactment of both being placed on the familiar non-partisan bloc of class representatives. But whatever the next step, it is opportune to discuss one of the more important factors which is bound to condition the mid-western farmers' activities and success for years to come. If the farmers recognize this factor and act accordingly they will be on solid ground; they are bound to recognize it some time, and it would be better for them to do so before it becomes too late.

Our text occurs in Mr. Murphy's article. "Before the War," he writes, "the United States sent abroad interest on foreign investments in this country to the annual value of $200,000,000. These interest charges were paid largely with exports of wheat, pork and cotton. Since the War, the interest payments are coming the other way, and, consequently, Europe's buying power for farm products has been badly depressed." This statement might have been made even stronger. The changing of the United States from a debtor to a creditor nation is one of the most significant developments both in world and American economy for many decades. European purchasing power for American farm products has not only been depressed, but in all probability has been permanently impaired. While spokesmen for the farmers pay some attention to the crude fact, they frequently misinterpret its significance. Means of mitigating the shock which the changes occasion to the American exporting farmer, and of adjusting his future calculations to it, ought to be of primary concern to agricultural leaders.

For many years our agricultural exports to Europe grew rapidly. These were the years when we were paying larger and larger volumes of interest and principal on European investments, when our land was cheap and was being quickly developed by settlers and relatively low-cost labor, when large quantities of European manufactures were being imported. Then came, about the beginning of the present century, a period of diminishing agricultural exports. This coincided with the growth of domestic manufacture, the accumulation of capital, the lessened reliance on European investors, the increase of land values and marginal agricultural costs in this country, and the expansion of cheaper farm production in Canada, in the Argentine, in Russia, in Australia and elsewhere. There seemed no good reason why the decline of agricultural export should not continue.

The War really brought first, not an interruption of a period of expanding agricultural exports, but an interruption of the declining trend. Producers more distant from Europe were cut off by lack of shipping, submarine risks and high freight rates. European production decreased. America granted virtually unrestricted credits to the Allies. Price became a matter of secondary consideration. The result was, of course, "prosperity" for the American farmer. But it was bound to pass with the disappearance of war conditions. War credits ceased, shipping rates fell, submarines were banished. The pre-war downward trend would have been resumed in any case. In addition, of course, the European unsettlement and post-war depression, combined with deflation at home, matched an abnormally reduced consumption against our abnormally increased production.

It was natural for the farmers, after their war experience, to look upon large European consumption as the condition of their success, to regard the disposal of their exportable surplus as the key to their situation. It is this state of mind that has given rise to the Haugen bill and similar measures. But in doing so they have overlooked several crucial facts. One is that though we have become a creditor instead of a debtor nation, the farmers have not yet appreciably suffered from that change, but rather from the aftermath of the abnormal volume of war production. The present year is the first one in which there is any sign in the net balance of international payments that the rest of the world is beginning to pay its debt to us. In other words, we have continued since the War to have a surplus of exports over imports, not as large to be sure as in the years 1916-1920, but still of respectable size in comparison with pre-war years. This was due to the fact that during this period we have been lending abroad, first through the government, then through private agencies, more than the repayments of principal and interest amounted to. If we had not done so, the farmers' situation would have been still worse. But we cannot continue every year to lend more than we are paid. One conclusion from this fact is that by no conceivable means could the large war exports of farm products have been continued. Restriction of production, with falling values, was an inevitable result of what had gone before. On account of the nature of farming and its lack of organized control this restriction could not be a conscious process as in large-scale industry and it was correspondingly painful, but it could hardly have been avoided. The second conclusion is that the effect of such payments as Europe will make to us is still to be felt, and the farmers' problem is, not so much to increase exports as to check their fall while more permanent adjustments can be made.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In view of this fact it is odd to see Mr. Brookhart, Senator Borah and others who represent midwestern sentiment attacking the administration because it has in their opinion demanded too small payments of war debts from the Allies. On the contrary, they should in their own interest be attacking the administration because it has not canceled those debts. And it is futile in the long view for them to lay chief emphasis on a means of disposing of the agricultural surplus in foreign markets when the chances are ten to one that they must increasingly depend on the home market and must prevent the occurrence of surpluses by adjusting domestic demand and supply to each other.

For another fact, generally unrecognized, is that during the period in the last century when agricultural exports were increasing, farm prices were low and the farmer was constantly discontented, while during the first fifteen years of this century, when the importance of exports was diminishing, the farmers were receiving a growing share of the national income and were becoming more prosperous. The home market and its growth are after all of great concern. It is true that a sudden collapse of the foreign market like a sudden collapse in any part of his demand will adversely affect the farmer, but it is not true that a gradual loss of foreign markets need injure him if in the meantime he can hold the domestic market and this increases rapidly enough.

There is, of course, some danger that we may, with the extension of foreign investment and home manufacture, become a topheavy nation like Great Britain, in which agriculture is utterly subordinated to mechanical industry, and fails to compete successfully with more primitive parts of the earth even for the home market. But that result can be avoided neither by protective tariffs, nor by free trade, nor by devices for selling agricultural products abroad for less than the domestic price. Something more far-reaching is necessary. If we were writing the farmer's program we should include among its main objectives the following:

> Drastic reduction or cancelation of all war indemnities and debts.
>
> The use of surplus capital so far as possible to increase the welfare and purchasing power of the domestic population, rather than in foreign investments.
>
> Wide distribution rather than concentration of wealth—and hence opposition to the Mellon tax régime.
>
> Measures to aid the geographical decentralization of industry, state and regional planning, and more economical access to markets for farm goods.
>
> Stabilization of the dollar.
>
> Attention to the problem of rising land values.
>
> Adequate social control of public utilities, especially electric power.
>
> And of course, the development of the coöperative movement in its fullest possibilities, together with scientific research and agricultural education.

This program includes neither export machinery nor tariff reform—the two projects which now seem nearest the farmers' hearts. To the first we have no objection in principle, but we fear that it would not work, and that if it did work it could be at best only an emergency measure, powerless in the long run against the economic forces which are restricting the foreign market for our farm products. The second we approve in principle, but we should not expect from it much alleviation of the farmers' position. We sincerely hope that the farmers will before long arrive at a program which can stand more than a few years' experience and which will not divert their attention from the major tasks facing them.

Mexico and the Catholics

ON August 1, Roman Catholics throughout the world will utter special prayers that the attitude of the Mexican government toward their church may be modified. This extraordinary incident will come as the result of an order by the Pope himself. It has been produced by the decree issued by the government of Mexico on July 3, announcing a drastic series of anti-clerical measures.

The Catholics' reliance will not be solely on prayer. The new rules go into effect on July 31, and on the same day the Mexican members of the Church will inaugurate a commercial boycott of the most rigid and extensive character for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on the Calles government. They will not buy anything save the necessities of life, will not travel, or indulge in amusements or social activities. The boycott is described by its proponents as part of "a life and death battle" between the Church and the State.

The first point to be noted in considering this quarrel is that it is not a new one. The measures to which the Catholics are now objecting were mainly promulgated in the Constitution of 1857 and the Reform Laws of 1859, a few additional details being written into the Constitution of 1917. For many years after 1859 the laws were enforced to some extent, amid bitter protests by the Church, and this was true even in the early days of the complaisant Diaz régime. Since then they have remained more or less a dead letter until the present. Even now, the government would doubtless have been glad to let sleeping dogs lie had it not been forced to take action by public opinion among its own supporters, of whom a majority are anti-clerical.

Going still further back, it is fair to say that throughout the history of Mexico since the European invasion Church and State have been at loggerheads. The bloody-handed adventurers who first conquered the country and slaughtered its inhabitants so ruthlessly were accompanied by priests

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who helped to complete the beneficent work of civilization by scattering missions and churches far and wide. These speedily grew in wealth, size and influence until it was often the case that more real power rested in their hands than in those of the civil government. Prof. E. A. Ross estimates that by the middle of the nineteenth century, two-thirds of the productive wealth of the country was in the hands of the Church. Before 1859 it had fomented four revolutions on its own behalf; and its answer to the laws of 1857 and 1859 was to bring about the intervention of the French and the ill-fated interlude of Maximilian. From that time until the present, the warfare has continued intermittently, culminating in the present remarkable open attempt of the Church to rouse public opinion here and thus bring about intervention by the United States to force abandonment of the anti-clerical laws.

What are those laws? The ones included in the decree of July 3 have been summarized as follows:

> (1) No foreigner may exercise the religious profession in Mexico.
>
> (2) Education must be given in official schools and be secular. No religious corporation or minister of any creed may establish or direct schools of primary instruction.
>
> (3) Religious orders, convents and monasteries will be dissolved.
>
> (4) Any minister who incites the public to refuse to acknowledge public institutions or to obey the laws will be severely punished.
>
> (5) No publication, either religious or merely showing marked tendencies in favor of religion, may comment on national political affairs.
>
> (6) No organization may be formed whose title has any word or any indication that it is connected with religious ideas.
>
> (7) Political meetings may not be held in churches.
>
> (8) All religious acts must be held within the walls of a church.
>
> (9) No religious order of any creed may possess or administer property or capital.
>
> (10) The churches are the property of the nation. Other ecclesiastical properties, such as bishop's palaces, houses, seminaries, asylums, colleges, convents and all buildings constructed for religious purposes pass into the possession of the nation, the use to which they are to be put to be determined by the government.
>
> (11) Heavy penalties are provided for ministerial or other authorities who fail to enforce the above provisions.

The Constitution of 1917 contains further provisions of the same sort. Ministers of religion may not vote, hold office or assemble for political purposes; they must not wear a garb indicative of their calling; they may not inherit real property from a religious association or from fellow clergymen, or from private individuals not blood relatives. (This of course to prevent dummy ownerships of Church property.) No studies carried on in theological seminaries may be credited in state universities. The civil ceremony alone legalizes marriage, though the religious one is not prohibited. No political party may bear a name indicative of relation to any religious belief. The state legislature may determine the maximum number of ministers of religious creeds desirable in any locality.

These regulations do not mention the Catholic Church by name; in theory they apply to all religious denominations equally. In fact, however, the Catholic Church is the one mainly concerned. Ninety-five percent of the people of Mexico are members of that faith; other denominations have a relatively unimportant position in Mexico. The attempt to excite the Protestants of the United States about the situation on the ground that their interests are equally endangered has been singularly unsuccessful. Protestant clergy in Mexico announce that they are obeying the laws, intend to obey the new ones, and believe they will be hampered by them little or not at all. The Catholics on the contrary have in some cases gone so far as to state that they do not feel themselves bound by secular authority; and are making strenuous efforts, as we have already suggested, to get back to the position they formerly enjoyed.

Chief of the grievances alleged by the Mexican government against the Church is interference in politics; and there is no doubt that historically, at any rate, this is well founded. Even the hierarchy does not deny that in the past it has waged bitter, unrelenting and effective warfare against a hostile government—and that "hostile" has meant virtually any government not under Church domination.

Of equal if not greater importance is the charge, also corroborated by impartial foreign observers, that the Church has failed to show proper interest in the welfare of its own communicants. Although it has resisted the development of secular education it has failed to educate the masses of the people who remain densely ignorant, disease-ridden, poverty-stricken and exploited. It has made no effort to relieve the peon from his condition of virtual slavery on the great haciendas; indeed, it has gone so far as to excommunicate peasants for taking part in the division of estates which was legalized by the civil authorities. It made the ceremony of marriage so expensive that it was an impossible luxury for the poor, many of whom were therefore forced to "live in sin." The virtually compulsory system of tithing operated as an onerous form of taxation which fell most heavily on those least able to afford it. Until Protestant competition forced a different attitude in very recent times there were parts of the country where scant attention was paid even to the spiritual guidance of the flock. The Church has been a vigorous opponent of woman's suffrage, of the extension of labor unions and, as in the United States, of prohibition.

Frequently in the past, Protestant missionaries have been subjected to indignities which they be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lieved were instigated by the priests. Shopkeepers have refused to sell to them; other persons have declined to perform any sort of service, and in extreme cases they have been stoned or mobbed. Mexico is and for centuries has been a hotbed of anti-Semitism; and its victims, also, have accused the Church of setting afloat among ignorant and superstitious parishioners the wild stories which they believe—even wilder than the similar stories about Catholics which are afloat among our own Ku Kluxers.

The spokesmen for the present policy of the government insist that it is not in any way anti-religious; that the laws permit and the state officials will welcome, the continuance of all genuine religious activities by the Catholic or any other Church. They claim the present statutes are merely an attempt to bring about in Mexico such a separation of Church and State as we have had in our own country from the beginning of the republic, and that the drastic character of the laws, forbidding many things which are permitted north of the Rio Grande, is due to the insistence of the Church on maintaining its old prerogatives. They contend that the enterprises now prohibited are for the most part those upon which the Church should never have embarked, and that a spiritual renaissance is possible if the Church will accept its altered status and set to work within the boundaries laid down for it.

In seeking to predict the outcome of the present struggle it is natural to turn to other countries which have gone through a similar experience. Of these the most notable are France and Russia. The anti-clerical movement in France in the early years of the present century culminated in the seizure of Church property in a fashion which provides many parallels for what is going on in Mexico. The chief difference lies in the fact that France was a strong nation and Mexico is a weak one; and therefore there was no suggestion in the former case that a powerful neighboring state should be persuaded to intervene. In France it was soon discovered that the Church could continue to function despite the measures put into effect against it—measures denounced as bitterly at the time as those of the Calles régime are today.

The case of Russia, where the Greek Church was fought after the revolutions of 1918, furnishes an even more striking parallel. The Russian moujik and the Mexican peasant are similar in their ignorance and poverty as in their piety. The Russian government tried to destroy the power of the Church out of hand; and discovered that it had undertaken a task of impossible magnitude. True, the enormous wealth was confiscated, and the efforts of Church dignitaries to bring about a counter-revolution were ended, but religion proved to be too deeply rooted in the life of the common man to be stamped out in one generation—or in two.

The masses of the Mexicans will doubtless remain in the Catholic faith for a long time to come, whatever the government may do or say. Mexico is struggling with a problem as formidable as any nation has ever faced: she is seeking to raise her submerged millions to at least minimum standards of education, economic security and health. In that task the Church, if it will, can play a part so great that it might fairly be called indispensable. It can do so even within the limits laid down by the present legislation. The Church authorities cannot fail to be cognizant of this fact; and if they will reconcile themselves to their loss of temporal power, there is good ground for the expectation that some sort of modus vivendi will be found whereby Church and State may forward their common interest, the welfare and happiness of the Mexican people.

America's War Responsibility

THE NEW REPUBLIC is fortunate this week in being able to print a review of Prof. Harry Elmer Barnes's Genesis of the War by Mr. Lowes Dickinson. Professor Barnes is one of the most active among those American historians who, on examination of the facts attending the outbreak of the War, have come to the conclusion that the Treaty of Versailles is in error in asserting Germany's sole guilt for that occurrence; and since, as Mr. Lloyd George has announced, the arrangements under that treaty were predicated upon this assertion, they hold that these arrangements should be subject to revision, at least so far as they contradict the terms of the armistice agreement. Mr. Dickinson does not dissent from this view. He, like Mr. Barnes, is a revisionist. He merely seeks to attenuate Mr. Barnes's judgment of the Allies, particularly of Lord Grey. It is as natural that Englishmen should be sensitive on the subject of Lord Grey, as Americans on that of Woodrow Wilson. In both cases national honor is bound up with their characters and their acts. But it would be vain to deny that Lord Grey's repeated statements in Parliament in regard to his commitments to France misled both England and Europe as to the real situation, and contributed vastly to the confusion of purpose out of which the War came.

What is most significant about the discussion, however, is that whereas seven years ago the American people through their publicists and statesmen were declaring that Germany was uniquely responsible for the War, and were ready to make the future political and economic disposition of Europe depend on this thesis, meanwhile cursing as disloyal everyone who did not enthusiastically accept it, at the present time we find those who have not forgotten all about the matter anxiously watching Professor Barnes and other experts weigh out by milligrams the mint, annis and cummin of War guilt, with the Franco-Russian scale steadily sinking.

There is a question which must occur to those

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interested in the labors of Professor Barnes and others which Mr. Dickinson is too courteous to mention. Why, it might be inquired, all this stress and strain on the part of American historians in regard to the exact apportionment of guilt among the European nations for beginning the War? Why not equal concern with the circumstances under which the United States entered it? What were our real reasons and assurances for prolonging it? Why not, along with this preoccupation with the mendacity of Lord Grey, an equally drastic consideration of the limits of the veracity or wisdom of Woodrow Wilson? Does it not savor slightly of self-righteousness on the part of our peace societies and foreign politics associations to fix their attention so exclusively on the guilt of foreigners and avert their eyes so completely from domestic responsibility? Although the United States has not followed the praiseworthy example of Germany and Soviet Russia in publishing the documents concerning our entrance into the War, there is a considerable body of testimony, designed and undersigned, bearing on the subject. The letters of Walter H. Page may indeed be dismissed as negligible, but there are the letters of Wilson, of House, of Lane. Colonel House's papers reveal the fact that the administration put forward a plan for a general peace in 1916 with the implication that its foreseen rejection by the Central Powers would bring the United States into the War on the side of the Allies. Did President Wilson appreciate the use made of this implication? Although the Allies did not accept it, the revelation of the attitude of the Wilson administration may have strengthened in one way or another their determination to carry on the War to a knockout—and that decision was madness as Europe today knows. What brought about Wilson's change of attitude after 1916? Did he know of the secret treaties? Simultaneously with, and shortly after, our entrance into the War serious efforts were made on both sides to secure a negotiated peace. There were the proposals of Lord Lansdowne in England, of M. Caillaux in France, and Prince Sixtus of Bourbon in Austria. The attitude of the Wilson administration toward such sane proposals may be inferred from the fact that knowledge of some of them was suppressed in this country by censorship; but the precise responsibility of this country for the prolongation of the War remains to be determined.

Not only are these matters left undiscussed, but the amateurs of foreign affairs who are so keen about the war guilt of Europe show a certain malaise at the mere mention of them. This is true also of the representatives of the people to whom the investigation of the War properly belongs. Senator La Follette, who was one of the few men in public life who held to the democratic theory that the decision of peace or war should belong to the people, attributed the belligerency of the United States in part to the loans to the Allies which the bankers could no longer support, and which were taken over by the government. The Senate, under the leadership of the present Secretary of State, nearly put Mr. La Follette out of his seat. During the War this position was explainable, but after the Treaty of Versailles had been signed in 1921, Representative Michaelson offered a resolution in the House of Representatives calling for an investigation of the circumstances attending our entrance into the War, particularly the part played by propaganda. His remarks were punctuated with interruptions. They were characterized as "scandalous" and "treasonable," as a "slimy, slanderous, disgraceful, outrageous assault" on the honor of this country—and a motion was made to expunge them from the record.

Now this attitude of invincible ignorance in regard to responsibility for the most important decision taken by the United States in its history is particularly unpraiseworthy in view of the interest of our historians and amateurs in the war guilt of others. Revelations may tend to destroy certain accepted values, and deflate vested interests. The glory of war, even to militarists, depends in a measure upon its justice and necessity. A purely defensive war against invasion is one which even pacifists find it hard to condemn. The War of the United States against the Central Powers was not of this character. What was it? A crusade to defend civilization against the military barbarism of Huns, as the country in general tried, with some success, to believe? Who were responsible for this belief, by what means was it diffused, and to what extent was it justified? Particularly what interests, financial and political, were benefited by the War and what part did they play in bringing it about? These questions under the most favorable view cannot be answered without hurting our national pride, and diminishing the self-esteem in which we delight to hold ourselves; but it is better that we share to some extent with European nations the cup of repentance, and recognize ourselves, if the facts justify it, as one among the guilty, not the one innocent Pharisee in a crowd of publicans—a rôle which is becoming slightly ridiculous.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1926, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK
HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN ROBERT LITTELL
ALVIN JOHNSON GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG
ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY EDMUND WILSON
GILBERT SELDES E. C. LINDEMAN LEO WOLMAN
WALDO FRANK

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

G. B. S.: The Father of the Flapper

That Shaw will ever become a popular dramatist in the sense that Sardou and Pinero are popular, seems to be beyond all probability.—*H. L. Mencken in 1905.*

ON July 26 Bernard Shaw will be seventy years old. To be sure, he has lived to see a dozen successful revivals of his plays for every half-hearted attempt to exhume Pinero or Sardou. But his popular triumph is not to be measured by audiences or readers; rather by his effect upon the thousands who have never heard of him and perhaps never will.

For Bernard Shaw, more than any other one person, has created the manners of our age. Every day the dramatis personæ of our world grow more and more Shavian in much the same sense that those of the mid-nineteenth century were Victorian. Take the flapper, for instance. He fathered her (in Dolly, in Cleopatra, and a little in Vivie) in the reviled nineties, a quarter-century before she became the vogue in life. From her unashamed cigarette were lit those of her myriad sisters of the nineteen twenties. Take any of our wild young people, and remember Margaret and Bobby in Fanny's First Play. Compare the frank banter of the modern drawing-room, novel, or play with the older grandiose manner; date the change and again you will find Shaw. As for our modern sport of baiting Victorianism, of which Mr. Mencken's own—I am sure he will admit—popular magazine is so consistent an exemplar, it is pantomime over a corpse. Shaw served as St. George to that dragon twenty years ago.

I

This setting up patterns of behavior and thought was of course the last thing Shaw intended. Indeed in so doing he was creating anew the type of convention he was trying to destroy. He himself had best described its dangers. "Since man's intellectual consciousness of himself is derived from descriptions of him in books," wrote he, "a persistent misrepresentation of humanity in literature gets finally accepted and acted upon . . . so that the Beatrices and Francescas in the picture galleries of one generation, to whom minor poets address verses entitled To My Lady, come to life as the parlor-maids and waitresses of the next." With this sort of romantic illusion about life Shaw protested that he had nothing to do but to expose it. For he was, he said, one of the small minority who could see reality. Or, as he put it elsewhere, he attempted in his plays to "substitute natural history for conventional ethics and romantic logic." And these remarks occur in the prefaces of the very collections which contain his ingenious invention of the flapper.

So, as if by one of his own paradoxes, Shaw, the realist, the scientist, the recorder, becomes the chief exemplar of the hypothesis of his æsthetic contemporary, Oscar Wilde, that literature anticipates life, and not life literature. He has made his deepest impress on our generation not because he has, as he said, a clearer sense of reality, but because he has a heightened and sympathetic artistic imagination. He destroyed Victorianism, it is true, but he substituted for it in men's minds not natural history but another romantic convention. Like his puppet Tanner in Man and Superman by the Life Force, so he by the artistic force was carried on in spite of himself to creation. He has been betrayed by his own art. One wanton creative flash, in the case of the flapper, has been more potent in its effect on human behavior than all his carefully planned theses for socialism and pacifism.

II

Take the flapper as example, because she is one of Shaw's nicest anticipations of life, and because she perhaps best epitomizes the differences between our age and the Victorian. The term flapper, to be sure, is already outmoded, and for our purpose not very accurate. Yet it is seemingly the only designation we have for the present saucy, boyish fashion in women—age eighteen, size fourteen, whose aim innocently reverses the Victorian motto: "Be clever, sweet maid, and let who will be good." That, I take it, is the prevalent model of women of all ages in most civilized occidental countries. How far did Shaw anticipate her, and what was the situation that made women ultimately seize upon her as an escape from the rule of the Victorian womanly woman?

When in 1896 the disconcerting Dolly appeared in You Never Can Tell, she was greeted by the reviewers as an enfant terrible, one of Mr. Shaw's impossible whimsicalities. A "darling little creature, hardly eighteen, her tiny figure dressed with the daintiest gaiety," and obviously a sort of heroine, she nevertheless showed not a trace of the customary womanly inhibitions. She mastered situations "with cool insolence," and the only person whom she treated with any respect was the waiter. When finally she scandalized her father by ordering cigarettes, it was a climax of uproarious mirth. Today she is the distinctively modern character of the play, and the laughs all come in other places. And when she dances as Columbine in the last act, she seems the modern flapper to the very knees.

Yet it was the laughter of this comic, domineering little figure that finally broke the spell of the womanly woman. As a matter of fact, by the eighteen-nineties, after nearly a century of the saccharine domesticity she represented, people were thoroughly bored. Her clinging virtue, her trailing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

skirts, her untrained mind and total economic dependence were alike a bother in a machine age. But there seemed as little likelihood of getting rid of her as of woman herself. The Victorian mind was totally unable to conceive an attractive good woman in terms other than these. They were the hallmarks of marriageability.

The only virtuous alternative that had been presented was that of the New Woman, a model invented by women themselves, with courage but little imagination. The New Woman demanded the right to use her legs and her brains, or usually more specifically to ride a bicycle and go to college, even sometimes to be a stenographer or to vote. And all these things she wished to do exactly as men did them. Fundamentally she accepted the dictum of her age. She confounded her sex with the inhibitions of the womanly woman, and she too believed that once forswearing these, she automatically abrogated charm. So she often went to college or cut her hair as a nun takes the veil to symbolize her removal from the world of love and marriage. She scarcely challenged the womanly woman at all. She was merely a negation.

Here then was an impasse. On one side stood the womanly woman pretending that she had no mind; on the other the New Woman pretending that she had no sex. And in the Victorian consciousness never the twain could meet. One attribute precluded the other. Popular writers cartooned the New Woman. Ibsen showed the essential boredom and unhappiness of the womanly woman. But no one supposed that there was any solution. Indeed a favorite Victorian plot was the New Woman, the cold, high-minded lady, forfeiting all at last for love, undone by her own surging womanliness. (Such a character is Shaw's own Gloria, already as much out of style as Tennyson's Princess, a mere show-girl background for the pyrotechnic of the modern Dolly.)

To be sure Ibsen was showing women the summits of a new synthesis, a new freedom, but in the distance, only to be attained through an abyss of individual martyrdom. Then came Shaw and unwittingly slung a nice new patent bridge across the chasm. But the bridge itself was so shiny and attractive that most of the women who finally flocked upon it have never got beyond the middle.

III

What Shaw did was fairly simple. He took the New Woman and gave her extreme youth and charm—gaiety, assurance, frankness, chic. Where the New Woman had been heavily masculine, his heroines were engagingly boyish. Where the New Woman renounced man, the Shavian flapper frankly pursued him. There was just the spiritual difference between the New Woman and the Shavian as between the shorn locks of Dr. Mary Walker and the bob of Beatrice Lillie.

Take Vivie, for instance, the flapperized bluestocking. A college girl with honors, a bicycle, a masculine handshake and a passion for poring over figures in an office, she was as personable, as playful and as vigorously wooed as any heroine of melodrama. Take Dolly, allegorically enough the favorite child of the New Woman (Mrs. Clandon)—a cuter boy than her brother, too engaging to be hated, too masterful to be derided.

Indeed after Shaw's artistic—let us even say, romantic—imagination got through with one of his heroines, the womanly woman had as much chance beside her as cambric tea beside a cocktail. And gradually, subconsciously, women began to recognize this. Here was a far more piquant way to set themselves off from men. By Shavian paradox the way to become more devastatingly feminine was to become more masculine. So finally they began to embody the spirit of the Shavian heroine. They even improved on her by undressing the part, and unwound themselves from yards of hair and skirts along with less tangible inhibitions. And the womanly woman suddenly became the old-fashioned woman, as quaint as the bustle and just as popular.

So after all Shaw set women free? Not at all. He has been the dictator of their conduct for our age. Not that the flapper ideal has not been immensely serviceable to women. But it has little wider reality; it has little more freed them to express their own individualities than the Victorian illusion of the womanly woman, against which Shaw fought.

In some ways it is even more stereotyped and tyrannical than the pattern it superseded. The womanly woman could grow old—comfortably settling into a rocking chair and cap as the years drew on. The modern woman has no such immunity. Under her canon she must not by overt act of dress or manner admit to more than a decade beyond her prototype Dolly. Moreover, hers is a strenuous and nervous pattern, demanding constant skill and initiative as against the passive gentility of the Victorian model. Think of the naturally soft domestic grandmothers scourged over golf courses under the Shavian rod, foregoing ice cream sodas, stinging back with smart retorts, where Victorianism would have allowed them to relapse into matronly pulchritude and sweater-knitting, amid universal applause.

Not that Mr. Shaw should be blamed for this. He suffers merely as any prophet whose apt symbol has become an institution. He has simply had the rare experience of seeing in his own lifetime the operative effects of his own creation. He has seen his paradoxes become platitudes, "the whirligig of time" bring his audiences to his point of view.

Moreover, the flapper and her comrades were inspirations of his youth. Even now he is only seventy. According to his theories and our wishes he has at least a century more before him. Perhaps he can still de-institutionalize us, and laugh us into a varied self-expression, as yet unimagined in our Shavian era. EUNICE FULLER BARNARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Corn Belt's Next Move

NOW that the Haugen bill has been beaten for the time being at least, and the administration's "economically sound" measure for presenting one hundred millions to tame coöperatives has been sent dramatically to the junk heap, what will corn belt farmers do next? The far West, and especially the Pacific Northwest, is interested in the matter, of course, so are certain sections of the South, but up to date the corn belt has supplied most of the leadership and most of the funds and all the Greek fire used in the campaign. As I write, the corn belt has again taken the leadership through the calling of a conference of eleven states, at Des Moines, a conference which will be in progress when this issue of the New Republic appears.

There are a variety of opinions on the future, ranging from the view of Senator Fess that the movement for farm relief is only a passing craze to the conviction of some enthusiasts that it indicates the start of a new political party of the South and West. The estimate in this article has the merit of being that of a close observer of the movement. Its impartiality suffers possibly from the fact that I am a corn belt man and an advocate of the export plan.

I

The first result of the defeat of the farm bill by Congress is already quite evident. Every head that seems to bear an administration label has been hit very vigorously. So far this movement has been quite successful, in spite of the vain efforts of some supporters of the administration to disclaim any such loyalty. In Iowa, for instance, the campaign for the Republican nomination for Senator developed into an amusing contest among three candidates as to which could show that he disliked the administration's farm program the most. Mr. Brookhart made the most convincing argument on this point and so won.

This reaction, of course, has been automatic. No systematic campaign was needed to inspire it. Some very excellent disciplinary work has been done. Hitting heads is a very necessary operation at times. Yet in the long run something more than an exhibition of resentment is needed if the farm situation is to be dealt with adequately.

The export plan which has appeared as the McNary-Haugen, the Dickinson, the Haugen bill, in Congress, is concerned with one particular phase of the general farm situation: the reduced buying power of such farm products as wheat and pork in so far as this is due to the reversal of credit balances between the United States and Europe since the War.

Before the War, the United States sent abroad interest on foreign investments in this country to the annual value of $200,000,000. These interest charges were paid largely with exports of wheat, pork and cotton. Since the War, the interest payments are coming the other way and, consequently, Europe's buying power for farm products has been badly depressed. The high tariff on industrial goods, of course, aids in this situation by keeping out those manufactured goods in which European countries would be able to pay their debt and so gain further credit for the purchase of farm products.

II

It is the aim of the export plan, for nearly three years now the favorite scheme of the corn belt, to neutralize the effect of this post-war reversal of credit balances, so far as its effect on farm products is concerned. This it plans to do by authorizing agencies to buy for export any basic agricultural commodity at the world price plus the tariff, to dump this surplus abroad for what it will bring, and to pro-rate the losses among all producers of the commodity. There have, of course, been minor changes from time to time in the plan as it has been presented to Congress. This, however, is a fairly accurate statement of its general purpose.

In the first McNary-Haugen bill cotton was given little attention, and the measure received almost no southern votes. In the Haugen bill just defeated, a special provision was made for cotton, on the theory that stabilization of the flow to market from year to year would remedy the worst troubles of the cotton market. The money to finance the holding of the crop from year to year was to be advanced by the government and repaid by an equalization fee levied on all the cotton that went into trade channels. In the final draft of the bill this year, this equalization fee was postponed for three years. To the credit of the Cotton Growers' Association, it should be said that this change was made, not at their request but at the request of southern Congressmen.

The first attempt of the corn belt people was to force this export plan upon the Republicans as an extension of the tariff principle. They pointed out that a tariff on a product of which a surplus was produced for export was worthless unless that product were controlled by a powerful organization able to do for itself what the export plan would have the government do. It is, of course, obvious that several million farmers can not combine to handle their own surplus problem as, for instance, the U. S. Steel Corporation and other companies in the same class can.

This argument appealed strongly to conservative gentlemen with Republican leanings who also hap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pen to own land. It didn't appeal with quite the same force to equally conservative Republicans east of the Ohio. They doubtless reflected that a protective system that protected everybody would cease to be of very much value to the interests about which they were particularly concerned. Accordingly a great many impassioned arguments about the "economic unsoundness" of the Haugen bill began to appear in the Congressional Record and in the editorial columns of such journals as the New York Evening Post and the Boston Transcript.

The insistence of the corn belt that if the protective idea were good for woollen goods or steel, it was also good for wheat and pork resulted in some acute embarrassment on the part of leading Republicans; but it apparently has not changed many votes. To retorts like that of Secretary Mellon, the corn belt has listened with shocked surprise and great irritation. "Protection for all or none" has begun to be a slogan that gets a cheer at most farm gatherings. "If we can't all sit at the table," says George Peek, "let's kick the legs out from under the table and all sit together on the ground."

III

The McNary-Haugen bill appealing to the protectionists was beaten. The Haugen bill, with the same main appeal but with some gestures toward the South, has just been defeated, but by a closer margin. The problem of the corn belt is this: Will it be advisable to go ahead on this old plan and try to get more friends among the protectionists; or will it be better to abandon this line of attack, swing to the Democrats and strike out for free trade?

To suggest a fight for free trade stirs up a number of questions in the corn belt, among which the following are probably the more important:

If the corn belt Republicans join with the Democrats on this issue, will the Democrats really work for tariff reduction all along the line or only for another Underwood tariff? The Underwood tariff is not to be referred to with pride by any Democrat interested in corn belt votes. Its main characteristic, from the point of view of this section, is that it cut the tariff on manufactured products slightly and put most farm products on the free list. The corn belt would rather take its chances with the Republicans again than with a Democratic party that insists on another Underwood act.

If agreement is reached between the two groups on a thorough-going plan of tariff reduction, will the southern protectionists and conservatives play ball? A good many in the Democratic party have been with the administration on almost every measure this year. Are there enough Coolidge Democrats in the party to wreck a tariff reduction program?

What will tariff reduction do to the price level? Farmers need a high price level, in order to pay off their debts in dollars of the same value as those in which the debts were contracted. Tariff reduction will lower the price level, unless steps are taken to peg it at a definite point. Will those who vote for low tariffs have the intelligence or the drive to put through at the same time a plan like that of Fisher or Commons for a stable general price level?

IV

The inhabitants of the corn belt found that there are no real protectionists. There are only groups that want their own particular graft. They fear that they may find also that there are no real free traders; that there are only folks who would like to see the tariff reduced on goods they themselves do not produce. The Republicans have proved hopeless; but are the Democrats any better?

Probably the answer will be a yes and no affair. There seem likely to be two planks in the corn belt farm platform. One will provide for an export plan on the lines of the Haugen bill. The second will demand a reduction of the tariff on the goods the farmer buys. The first provision will be based on the theory that there must be compensation for the damage done to the farmer by the reversal of trade balances since the War. The second will be based on the theory that since agriculture at the moment is getting the smallest portion in the sharing of the national income, special legislation to better his condition is proper.

To put any such measures across, a bi-partisan alliance seems necessary. So long as Democrats like Reed of Missouri talk seriously about the Underwood tariff as a farm relief measure, so long as Republicans like Green of Iowa talk seriously of the benefit to the farmer of a tariff on industrial products, plenty of difficulties may be confidently expected.

The corn belt, in common with all other farming sections, needs representatives who are primarily representatives of agriculture and only secondarily Republicans or Democrats. At the moment, of course, the corn belt probably is better equipped in this way than any other section. The South in its farming territory seems to be particularly handicapped by too many professional Democrats.

V

What are the chances for success of a program like this? Place your own bets. One thing should be remembered: this is not primarily a liberal revolt. It is a revolt of conservatives who feel that their property is being taken away from them. This may discredit it with a good many liberals, but it does add to its chances for success. Farmers and owners of farm land are fighting against what they believe is really expropriation. Don't

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

believe that the battle won't continue, for it will.

Much depends on the South. If the Cotton Growers' Association can swing the southern representatives over as the Corn Belt Committee of Farm Organizations has swung theirs, more than a good chance for victory exists. The Cotton Growers have a harder job. Out this way, in the corn belt, independence in politics is counted a fairly desirable thing. A Congressman can curse his party and still live. In a good many parts of the South no such recklessness seems to be permitted.

Some chance for southern support lies in the fact that a good many Democrats in that section are becoming less and less pleased with the necessity of working with the organized Democracy of eastern industrial sections. The difference between the rural and urban points of view is accentuated by the hostility of the Protestant South toward Catholic New York and Boston, and of the Prohibitionists toward the Wets. The efforts of some members of the McAdoo group to convert the Democratic party into a party primarily of the West and South may tie up excellently with the corn belt program.

VI

Of course no intelligent farmer believes that the millennium will come when this particular issue is settled. We out here know very well how many problems in regard to land values, marketing, production, taxes and so on, remain. A good many hope that the situation arising out of the reversal of credit balances since the War may be settled soon. There are plenty of other jobs to get at, and they are anxious to start on them.

Probably the main task of the corn belt right now is to keep this movement for farm relief from being used for the benefit of political parties rather than of agriculture. A good many politicians have been climbing on the bandwagon of late, and most of them are dragging their feet. If the movement can be used to push the fortunes of any candidate or group of candidates, or if it can be diverted to serve the necessities of either political party, the chances are that it will fizzle out in some feeble compromises. If the farm organizations can keep control, a new program of this sort has a real chance.

DONALD R. MURPHY.

Confessions of a Concert Singer

BEFORE me lies an open copy of a musical trade journal and I glance at a page announcing me as "America's Greatest Concert Soprano." The announcement was composed by little Miss Jennie in my manager's office, and in a few days I shall receive a bill for about $350 from the magazine to cover the cost of a full page of its valuable space. And the readers of this musical journal probably will skip quickly past this page—as I should, if it concerned any other singer—to read whatever may be amusing in such a publication. However, I am a great concert star. My manager says so, and it was he who persuaded me to invest $350 so that the rest of the world might know it.

"How can you expect to get dates at $1,000 if you don't splurge?" he asks.

My manager at least is honest, for officially I am supposed to be "sold," as they say in booking offices, for considerably more than that. But usually I get about $1,000 for singing a concert, and, as this is an anonymous confession, I sing from thirty to forty concerts a year. After deducting such expenses as railroad fares, hotel bills, accompanists' fees, my maid's wages, advertising and a commission to my manager, I clear an average of $550 per concert. It isn't an unprofitable business, once you establish yourself, but it's a long road—hiding again in my anonymity, I don't mind saying that this is my nineteenth year before the public—and many of my colleagues make barely enough to live. I consider myself one of the fortunates, for I have all summer free to enjoy myself with my husband and son in our little mountain camp, and my work is not really taxing. Occasionally I am compelled to make awkward journeys to fill engagements, and sometimes I must sing when I would rather do almost anything else, but, from a purely material point of view, I dare say that I am a reasonably successful woman.

I

If I had stayed at the opera and had had the opportunities which some young American girls are having today, I might have had an easier career, but I joined the opera at a time when Americans with no European experience were condemned to sing such trifles as Frasquita in Carmen, or the Countess in Rigoletto. On one occasion, I substituted for an indisposed Italian soprano as Micaela, but there were no critics present to make note of the event, and although the management complimented me, there were no further Micaelas for me. Minor American singers were kept in their places in those days!

My operatic experiences have no important bearing on this chronicle, for my career didn't really begin until I had left the opera house. I went through the usual routine of understudying rôles which I never sang, appearing in parts which required not more than two minutes' singing, declin-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing invitations for supper from gallant principals and ungallant hangers-on, and enjoying whatever glory there might have been in seeing my name on the official roster of the opera company. Like many other American girls in the troupe, I took whatever crumbs were tossed to me and was careful not to ask for more. It wasn't done.

In view of the fact that one eminent critic has suggested recently that a little more exercise might improve my breath control (how tactful these gentlemen can be!) I derive particular amusement from the recollection that I started on my concert career because a certain manager, now no longer active, thought that I was too comely to be an opera singer and advised me earnestly to devote myself to recitals. I may add that he was fearfully disappointed when he learned that I was married and devoted to my husband, but he was a good sport and proceeded to arrange a series of concert appearances for me. In my first year, I sang about ten times and received about $200 for each concert. Under the direction of my manager, I learned a few tricks which have never failed with an audience. I sang The Rosary, My Old Kentucky Home, and a few equally familiar songs on every program, and at the conclusion of the concert I invariably added The Last Rose of Summer, accompanying myself on the piano. Alas! I still have to sing The Last Rose of Summer to my own accompaniment (it is the only piece that I can play on the piano!) at every concert. Not to sing it would be a slight to my audience. It has become my trade-mark. Almost every successful concert artist has some such identifying number in his repertoire.

I know now that concert work is a business and that I am a business woman with definite commodities to sell, but when I went on my first concert tour I was fully of pretty, artistic delusions. As a student, I always had preferred songs to opera arias, and I loved nothing more than to sing some of the less known songs of Brahms, the interesting novelties of the French school and the many delightful and rarely performed compositions of the younger Englishmen, not to mention the many charming songs of my own countrymen. My manager speedily constituted himself censor over my programs and eliminated the songs which he did not himself know. The success of the hackneyed programs which he inflicted on me made it impossible for me to do the pioneer work which I had fondly imagined would be my pleasure. Now and then, on special occasions, such as the concerts of the Beethoven Association in New York, I have been able to sing unusual and beautiful music, but on my tours I must confine myself chiefly to songs already familiar to my audiences. I have had my moments of rebellion, but my insurgency always has been unsuccessful. The only really bad newspaper notice that I have received was directed at the most artistic program that I ever sang.

"Sing another program like that," said my manager acidly, "and you'll be ready to retire to private life."

II

I am a staple of the music business, and as the concert industry grows, I become more aware of the fact that I am not so much a musician as a salable product. When I began to sing concerts, I was one of five artists managed by a man who had a little office in an obscure building. Today, I am one of thirty or forty "attractions" merchandised by an organization which occupies a magnificent suite of offices in the heart of New York City. Although my personal relations with the men who handle my business affairs are agreeable, I know well that to them I am principally the embodiment of perhaps thirty-five thousand dollars' worth of engagements annually.

And yet, to the people who pay to hear me sing, I am a prima donna. The fact that I once sang in opera convinces them that I am a singer of "temperament," whatever that may be. My managers spend no little time telling me how I ought to dress, what I ought to say to this local manager or that club president, and how I am to treat interviewers from small newspapers. They send me to photographers who contrive in some miraculous manner to transform me into an exotic looking creature, and their pictures are reproduced in musical trade journals, along with strange articles, fabricated by the clever Miss Jennie, in which I give off high-sounding and utterly meaningless views on life, art, first-aid treatments, jazz, movies and even international politics. The musical journals do not beg for these literary efforts. They are the rewards of faithful advertisers. If you advertise, you are entitled to frequent and favorable mention. If you decline to advertise, you are neglected and, in some publications, criticized adversely. One of my colleagues who had refused to pay for advertising space became the subject of many neat editorial jabs for perhaps a year. He was a sensitive fellow and in despair he contracted for a page of advertising. In the next issue, there was an editorial commending his remarkable skill as an interpreter. One cannot become a celebrity (in most musical journals) for nothing. Lately, there have come into being several honest trade publications, but the majority of them continue their venerable tactics.

As a prima donna, I must remember who I am, on all occasions. My traveling retinue consists of my accompanist and a maid whom I palm off as my secretary, although she would be hard put to it to write a coherent letter. For all practical purposes, I would be just as well off with a woman accompanist whom I found congenial, but there is a tradition that a soprano of reputation must have a man at the piano.

There is a great deal of "psychology" involved

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in dealing with local managers and club presidents. Many laymen do not know how concert tours are arranged, and I shall set down as briefly as I can how this is done. My managers "sell" me either to local managers who pay my fee and make their money from the receipts or to music clubs which engage several artists each year for a course of concerts. Only a few artists hire their own auditoriums and put on their own concerts in various cities. New York, Chicago, Boston and one or two other cities are exceptions, for recitals in these centres are usually given at the artist's risk. Local managers generally are business men who deal in music. Most of them, I am glad to record, are also gentlemen, and I have had few unpleasant experiences with them. But all of them like to be flattered by a visiting artist. The artist's representative makes the initial sale, but it is up to the artist to keep the local manager "sold."

III

Some of my contemporaries have strange ways of ingratiating themselves with local managers. I know one singer who makes violent love to them. Another, I regret to say, regales them with questionable anecdotes. Still another presents them with bottles whose contents need not be described. But most of us content ourselves with doing little things that appeal to their vanities. When I appear for the first time for a local manager, I always present him with a large photograph of myself, inscribed to "that wonderful local manager, in memory of a perfectly managed concert." If he seems to be exceptionally impressionable, I write, "to my dear friend." I never fail to tell him that he has one of the finest auditoriums in which it ever has been my honor to sing, that his audience is the most intelligent and discriminating in the country, that he knows exactly how to make an artist give of his best and that it is no wonder that he is so successful. Sometimes I even go so far as to hint that I wish that he were my personal representative, for I have met few local managers who did not think that they knew more about the business than the men from whom they engaged artists.

Club presidents and committee members—usually women—present an entirely different problem. The choice of artists for a course of concerts usually is the choice of the dominating member of the music club or woman's organization, and that member generally feels her responsibility deeply. In many instances, that member is herself a musician of sorts—perhaps a singing teacher or a piano instructor at a local music school. Many such women have at one time longed for careers of their own and find compensation in presenting concerts, and these sponsors are often difficult for the visiting artist. The prima-donna cannot afford to put on airs before such women. She must meet them as equals, as fellow musicians, and she must impress them with her modesty, her simplicity and her "sweetness," the last being much the most important. "Sweetness" is indispensable for a woman singer who appears before groups composed largely of women.

IV

I wonder how many luncheons, teas and dinners I have attended as part of my professional career. When I arrive in a town to sing for a club, I am a celebrity, and consequently fair game for the lion huntresses. To decline the invitation of influential committee members would be fatal, and I must pretend to enjoy the meal and perhaps say a few kind words of gratitude in the course of it. By this time, however, that is to me as much a part of the concert as the actual singing of it.

Sometimes I realize that Mme. A, "America's Greatest Concert Soprano," and Mrs. B. (my husband's wife) are two different personalities and that the one has little relation to the other except that both inhabit the same body. This realization becomes most acute when the persuasive Miss Jennie telephones to me about publicity matters. I have never employed a personal press agent, but Miss Jennie, who is in charge of exploitation for my managers, sees to it that I am not neglected in this respect. When I am in New York on short vacations between concerts, I count that day lost on which Miss Jennie does not ask me to participate in a "stunt." I have never been able to understand the bearing of these adventures on my success or non-success in concerts, but everyone in the musical profession assures me that publicity is its backbone.

In the past few years, I have gone with Miss Jennie to the Flower Show to be photographed with a new sort of rose, "named for the famous prima donna"; I have posed for cameramen on the ice in Central Park, "opening the skating season"; I have acted as a dummy hostess at a children's party in an East Side settlement; and I have even been snapped in the act of throwing peanuts to the elephant in the Zoo. Compared to the "stunts" that some of my colleagues have had to survive, these experiences have been mild. One of my fellow sopranos was photographed dancing in the snow, clad only in a one-piece bathing suit. Of course, such proceedings would be impossible for me, for any number of good reasons, but I have speculated rather dubiously on how many engagements were obtained for my hardy sister on the strength of her exposure.

Miss Jennie has seen to it that I have not been omitted from the assorted symposia to which singers have contributed. So far, I never have heard of the views attributed to me until the symposium appeared in print. Neither have I seen any of the objects which I have endorsed heartily, except the particular make of piano which I use on tour, and Mrs. A. has approved in the public prints of many songs which she never has sung and wouldn't sing. The result of all of these "stunt"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

photographs, vicarious interviews and second-hand endorsements has been, I take it, a personality with which I am identified. Sometimes it has been hard to live up to it. Once, when I was listening to a concert in Carnegie Hall, I was overwhelmed by an excited young man who thanked me effusively for the great benefit that I had bestowed on him and who insisted on kissing my hand loudly and repeatedly. It appears that he was the composer of a song which my alter ego, in the person of Miss Jennie, had endorsed unstintedly.

V

Frequently, when I consider things, I wonder why I continue. My husband has been successful in his way, and I know that he resents, unobtrusively, my long absences from home, although he is proud of my career and couldn't bear to have me abandon it for his sake. My son—of whom, thanks to Miss Jennie's valiant attempts to make me an eternal thirty, the public knows nothing—complains that he has no opportunities to enjoy his mother's companionship. I think, sometimes, that I should like to retire, live a comfortable life at home, and, perhaps, give an occasional concert in New York.

After all, I am not, in any profound sense, an artist. I sing practically the same program in practically the same manner, from year to year. I do not have the thrill of presenting some lovely new songs to audiences who crave the unhackneyed. I know that I have made no genuine progress for ten years. I have developed my showmanship and the artificial personality of "America's Greatest Concert Soprano," and, in a commercial way, I have become a thoroughly dependable singer who has attained to at least one goal—reëngagements. But I have no ambition to do much more than make good with the immediate audience. I am not bored, for I enjoy singing, but there is no glamor for me. I am what my managers would call "a good, thousand-dollar artist." I am not a big star. I confess it humbly. I am merely a good vocal workman.

Why go on? I don't know. But I do. Concert singing, I fancy, is like acting, and once it gets into the blood, it stays there. This summer, in our camp, I shall sit in my canoe in the evenings and be glad that there are no trains to catch and no local managers or club president to flatter. But I know also that when fall comes, I shall go to the beautiful suite occupied by my managers, get my route slips, run through the program with my accompanist, and—yes—look forward to telling the local managers and club presidents how fine it is to be with them.

(This is the seventh in a series of anonymous confessions, in which men and women in various occupations and walks of life are giving their professional or spiritual autobiographies. Another will be published soon.)

Summer Revues

SELECTED numbers from the smaller revues: George Brown in Cherry Pie, an excellent act in the slenderest and obscurest of all the semi-amateur shows. Mr. Brown impersonates the head of a ladies' club explaining over the radio how to do over an old livery stable with crêpe de chine; he also impersonates the directors of a road company and of an art theatre, respectively, scolding their actors after a bad performance. Two skits by Perry Ivins in the Bad Habits of 1926, one of them a demonstration of the bicycle supposed to take place in the eighties and the other a burlesque of the annual all-star cast in a revival of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, with the actors all frightfully overacting the parts after the school of Henrietta Crosman and John Drew and the audience invariably greeting them with such roars of applause that it is impossible to hear what they say. The recitation, in The Bunk of 1926, of a dramatic poem called Devil-May-Care at a Washington Square studio party, during which the guests all talk to one another and go in and out of the room. The Rose of Arizona, a burlesque of the Sunny-Sally-Poppy musical comedy, in the Garrick Gaieties: I enjoyed especially the automatic charm of the Marilyn Miller heroine and the comedian's comic song, with a sure-fire "wow" in every line, How Did Mrs. Crockett Keep the Wolves from the Door While Davy Crockett Was Away. The Moscow Art Theatre production of Uncle Tom's Cabin in the Grand Street Follies, ("an example of the Sympathetic, Elastic Theatre"): Mr. St. Clare, exemplifying the Russian zeal for accuracy of local detail, got up like Uncle Sam, in a high hat and a blue suit with white stars; Little Eva shot up to Heaven in a "constructivist" elevator; a chorus of very decoratively but very bizarrely dressed slaves supplying a commentary on the drama from a scaffolding on one side of the stage; and a pack of blood-hounds on the other marking time in a conventionalized pursuit of Eliza crossing the ice. I only wish they had had the characters pretend to talk Russian.

The Grand Street Follies, I suppose, remains the best of the smaller revues, though I do not think that either of the last two shows has been quite up to the first. No one could have a higher opinion than I of the cleverness of Miss Agnes Morgan and the other ladies of the Neighborhood Playhouse; but I feel that they are tending to make their travesties too literal and too elaborate. The grand opera Abie's Irish Rose last year is an example of the sort of thing I mean; and even Uncle Tom's Cabin in the present show has too considerable stretches which are not a burlesque of anything, but merely a reproduction of scenes out of the play itself. Nor do I think that the idea of having all the New York celebrities come together at the North Pole was an especially happy one: the North Pole itself is uninteresting and there is not very much to be done with it, even in books of Arctic exploration. The things in this part of the show that I liked best were the description of The Dybbuk by Milt Gross's Mrs. Feitlebaum and the idea of having Texas Guinan turn out to be the long-lost daughter of Mother Goddam. Lily Lubell has always been my favorite among the Neighborhood Playhouse's dancers; and I am delighted to see

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

her get an opportunity to do one of Texas Guinan's little girls, after such a series of Hindu classics and allegorical ballets.

It seems to be the tragedy of these informal revues that, though they win their first successes through spontaneity, they afterwards tend to become labored. I thought the Garrick Gaieties this year seemed rather self-conscious and effortful (though, besides the number noted above, it possesses in Miss Edith Meiser a performer of real revue versatility). The principal influences on the humor of the smaller revues seem to be those of W. S. Gilbert and Benchley. Both provide some rather trying numbers. It is a mistake to think that the long patter songs of Gilbert can be successfully imitated today: they belong already to another world. Gilbert worked in a form which, popularized by Moore and by Hood, was fashionable in his time and appropriate to it: in ours, attempted by a young American, it seems doomed to sound artificial. And it is equally a mistake to suppose that the mastery of Benchley's formula is enough to reproduce a success which is really due to the personal charm of the lecturer on the Sex-Life of the Newt. I do not, however, want to leave the impression that the little revues are not enjoyable: on the contrary, as I have suggested, there is not one which hasn't some satiric skit or some amusing piece of nonsense of a quality rare in the bigger shows.

Among these bigger revues, however, the Winter Garden shows a considerable improvement. The comic side of the Winter Garden has usually been of rather a rudimentary character; but the humor of The Great Temptations keeps to quite a high level. There is a very amusing burlesque of the dinner party in The Shanghai Gesture, with Hazel Dawn in an excellent imitation of Florence Reed's enameled make-up and specially-manufactured vocal registers: when Mother Goddam, after denouncing her betrayer, tells her guests that they can now go home, as there will be no more dinner, the American representative of Florida real estate interests in China improves on the original by a new curtain line, "Well, thanks for the buggy-ride!" The Merry World, which seems generally to have pleased, I found a little disappointing and far too full of those dispiriting British skits which are one of the regrettable features of the Charlot revues and which correspond to the worst things in Punch, in which some obvious and stupid joke is either led up to by long preliminaries or, having been exploited to its furthest capacity at the beginning of the sketch, affords a continually diminishing amusement by being repeated over and over. Thus, in The Merry World, there is a scene from a play in which the prompter is supposed to supply the actors with the words they have forgotten by holding up objects with the same names.

The Follies have moved from the New Amsterdam Theatre and now go under a different name. It is rather melancholy to see the great framed display of the photographs of former Follies girls propped up in the outside corridor of the Globe, like the posters of a traveling vaudeville act, instead of just above the spacious staircase of the New Amsterdam, where they had some of the dignity of a special gallery of the illustrious graduates of a college. But the show itself remains the best thing of its kind in town: Edna Leedom, the Amazonian but amiable 100 percent American blonde grinding out the wise-cracks of her songs from a complete set of white teeth, which have the same expensive glitter as her diamonds and pearls; James Barton, with his fixed ginny stare and his paralyzed numbing finger, passing through the fatal series of phases of his disquieting drunken act; the sumptuous Greta Nissen, in a preposterous oriental pantomime, in which, in the rôle of a female Bluebird, with a complacent Scandinavian smile, she slowly decapitates her lovers and shoves their heads out the door with her foot; Moran and Mack; a rowdy little Charleston dancer called Mary Jane; Claire Luce, the pale moonbeam blonde, suspended in a revolving silver globe which sprays a dance of lightmotes on the backdrop, while the show-girls weight the eye in the crescendo of a cumulative parade of white peacock-feather head-dresses, each out-dazzling and out-towering the last. The only features I deplore are the increasing sourness and dullness of E. P. McEvoy's sketches and the fact that W. C. Fields (who, besides, used somewhat to soften and sweeten these latter), was not there to dance with Ray Dooley.

EDMUND WILSON.

Variety

Variety, a Ufa film, directed by E. A. Dupont. Rialto Theatre, New York.

THE first of the German invaders of the cinema was Lubitsch, then came von Stroheim; now there are Murnau, Mendes and Dupont whose Variety is his first film to be shown in this country. A dark, stinging tale of life in variety, utterly devoid of the pale puerilities, the sterile conventions, that cabin and confine the cinema, it has yet captured that ephemeral thing—the favor of the populace. Dupont, like von Stroheim, is a realist, ruthless, passionate, Rabelaisian. At some time or other all of this German band have been so. Lubitsch was when he directed in Europe, in Gypsy Blood, One Arabian Night, Passion; there was a vitality of a different sort, a light Viennese laughter in The Marriage Circle. But he lost something of it between Berlin and Hollywood. And it is this earthiness, this madness that reaches to ecstasy, this foot-in-the-soil intensity that has given even the least of these German films a dynamism that the watered romances of Hollywood have never approached.

Variety is not so exquisitely chiseled or so lyrical as The Last Laugh. Its story is far more commonplace, a melodramatic tale of a crime of passion among vaudevillians. Drama of a different genre, sensual, voluptuous, beautiful in its nakedness as Dupont has done it; a tragedy rich with a low, lusty laughter. It moves rhythmically, relentlessly towards its end, a perfectly coördinated work of art, each detail pertinent, illuminating, carved in the round. There is no gesture that is unconsidered, no planting of the camera that is not arresting and eloquent. Almost titleless, Variety is pure cinema, drama wholly dependent on pantomime; on the swift ordering of moving masses, the weird, shunting play of light and shadow, all

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of that restless, fantastic world of mechanistic device still so little explored.

Objects tearing through space; intangible, phantom shapes; swarming, searing eyes of the audience; chattering hands; white pin points of light that torture "Boss" Huller as his little world collapses about him; chains and machines that leap and revolve with a terrible intensity, destroying, whipping life into a timeless muddle —all this touches on moods too fragile for words, too tenuous to imprison, distorted creations of the unconscious mind. Always, there is that endless motion, charging and rebounding, singing through space, devouring. Faces, machines, inanimate objects even, are alive, plastic, lyrical with a strange animate silence. This is Picasso technique translated to a moving screen, which as yet only Murnau and Dupont, and a few of the experimentalists (Dudley Murphy, Fernand Leger) have carried so far. The Last Laugh used it, too, yet that evolved into a cameo-like melody. But Variety is crude, barbaric, pulsing, touched with wildness, like the music of Stravinsky, at times, although it is not so self-conscious.

Unlike The Last Laugh, Variety was not written directly for the screen. It is an adaptation of a novel by Felix Hollander, worked into a deft, malleable continuity. The scene is Hamburg, a circus on the waterfront, a dejected caricature of a circus whose frequenters are sad creatures that once were men. Disheveled sluts, still trading their wasted bodies, angle their arms and legs while the audience applauds in beery obscenity. In command is "Boss" Huller, powerful and gentle, a sensualist, the creature of his emotions. His wife, once a trapezist, now sullen and heavy-heeled, thumps the piano. A man with restless eyes and a leery smile, just off the ship, brings a girl to Huller, Berthe-Marie, a young rounded girl who dances. The voluptuous white-armed dancer from the Barbadoes, hips bending sinuously, maddens the half-naked men into a delirium. "Boss" can stand no more; the curtain is rung down; catcalls hurtle up from the pit; he decides to return to the trapeze with the dancer. In Berlin, "Boss," with his new partner, a petulant, untamed creature, an exquisite voluptuary, is in a circus near the Winter Garden. Then, the Winter Garden and "the three Artinellis" (Artinelli, Huller, Berthe-Marie), trapezists pursued by blinding lights and distorted perspectives high above the audience where they saw the air with their leaping bodies, unprotected even by a net below. (This is one of the most amazing stunts that trick photography has as yet manipulated.) Artinelli seduces Berthe-Marie, and "Boss," bull-necked and irresistible, knifes him in the dismal little room of the theatrical boarding house that was the setting of the seduction; then he gives himself over to the police. Then follow ten years in prison. All that has gone before is done on the screen as a flash-back, as the story of Prisoner Number Twenty-eight whose face is not revealed until the end, when he is at last released at the plea of his deserted wife. Freedom, and a bent, shuffling derelict passes through the gates.

In and around this relentless tale Dupont has worked his satire, a satire candescent and pitiless, scorching audience and performers alike. Chinese jugglers, trundling grimacing clowns, a serpentine dancer, a nude girl reflected on a dozen opera glass lenses, fat-chinned women, beery men with protuberant bellies, sycophants, fatuous fools . . . louts . . . the camera shrieks it . . . have been limned with the power and ferocity of a Daumier. And with what rich blacks Freund, camera man also of The Last Laugh, has lighted it, blacks that even Renoir would have envied.

In "Boss" Huller, another emotional instrument of fate, Emil Jannings, for the first time acting without make-up, has once again created a man. There is more drama, more tragic force, more joyous abandon in his broad, powerful back than in the faces of most actors. An actor with an imagination and restraint that transmutes each thing that he touches into something alive and rounded; a man with an unerring dramatic instinct, a leaping sense of humor, he is without an equal, whether it is in the playing of a decadent Louis, an old doorman with querulous eyes, or the passion-ridden bouncer of a circus. Without him it is difficult to imagine Variety. Miss Lya de Putti, by now well intrenched in the American movie colony, is an interesting and exotic beauty who ranges inordinately from the luxuriantly oriental, a woman out of Conrad, even to a plain-faced and callous, but always animated, screen actress. She plays with a temper and abandon that none but a European actress ever has, an emotional intensity, that seems always destined to be lost with importation to our shores. Warwick Ward, the hollow-cheeked villain of the piece, will doubtless be made still another of the Byronic permanents of Hollywood as soon as the deliberating movie makers can arrange it.

Here, in Variety, the cinema has at last depicted sex without self-consciousness and adolescent pruderies. It is the motif of the piece, riddling, overpowering, the basic theme of this tragedy of the backwashes of the show business; a tragedy that but for the grace of God and Herr Dupont might have passed into another shoddy anecdote of the sort that delights the readers of the journals for "people who think." But through the sardonic and unflinching lens of Dupont and Freund it has been charged with something of genius, warmed with a tormented, vital beauty having nothing at all to do with the feeble, chastened myths that make the "movies."

It is said that when Variety descends upon the dark corners of this country, especially the free and censored states of Massachusetts, Ohio and Pennsylvania, the entire Hamburg episode will be dropped. The piece will open with Berlin and the circus where "Boss" Huller and Berthe-Marie, discreetly married, are paired performers. But no one expects intelligence or the toleration of art in dark places. It would be incongruous to countenance Variety in hamlets where babies are admitted as naturals only for week-day showings, and even travelogues are stripped of their bathing sequences on Sunday. The great Berlin-to-Hollywood emigration grows more staggering day by day. But, in the face of it, it is wiser to forget what happens to directors in that fleshly paradise by the western sea where studio politics is the only intellectual diversion, and the director is merely an unhappy soul lost among the magnates in a Minotaur's cave.

EVELYN GERSTEIN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Armenia and American Honor

SIR: Mr. Turlington's article, Armenia and the Honor of America, in the New Republic for June 9 does not, in my judgment, contain one word of the chief basis of Armenia's case against the United States government. It is a jumble of misrepresentations, misstatements and misinterpretations.

The government of the United States, on its own initiative and of its own free will, injected itself into the Near Eastern case, and, by formal request, delayed, for nearly two years, the solution of the Turkish problem.

Acting through its executive and legislative branches, it deprived Armenia, in two instances, of proffered help by the Allies; held out to Armenia the promise that it would help, and, through inexcusable negligence, failed not only to fulfil its promise, but even to say, within a reasonable time, that it would not keep its promise.

It was in recognition of these facts that President Harding, by numerous letters, and orally, gave his word to do all that could be done to help Armenia, and Senator Lodge, even after the signing of the Lausanne Treaty, promised to take care of Armenian rights, if and when that Treaty came up for consideration.

President Harding's letter, written on the eve of the Lausanne Conference, which Mr. Turlington discounts with unbecoming levity and with repellent insinuations, is only another illustration of the President's conception of this government's duty to Armenia. It claims a right and acknowledges a duty to speak for Armenia, and promises to do all that can be done. Did the American delegation at Lausanne fulfil the President's wishes? Absolutely not. It "recommended" "unofficially" a "refuge" for the Armenians—after having assured in advance the Turkish delegates that its proposed "recommendation" was "perfunctory" only.

". . . Oil and tobacco were the big issues, and oil and tobacco were saved," observes Bishop Blake, in his comment upon the rôle of the American delegation at Lausanne.

The Armenians are not asking for a "home." They are not asking for military or financial help. They are only asking that this government use its diplomatic offices to secure from the Turks a corner of Armenia in exchange for the Lausanne Treaty. The Turks need and want the Lausanne Treaty.

President Wilson's award to Armenia is still valid, and imposes upon this government the moral duty to see to its fulfilment, to the extent of its opportunity. Without any desire to become a party to legal quibbles in the matter, let me say, briefly, that the President's arbitral act is not related to the Sèvres Treaty; that, unofficially, this government does not know that any such treaty ever existed; that the President's arbitral act is a moral contract between the Allies, who proposed it, and the arbiter; that an arbitral decision is not a mediation or recommendation, but a binding act upon the proponents and the arbiter, and the Allies have recognized that fact by leaving undefined, in their Lausanne Treaties, the boundary between Turkey and Armenia.

American friends of Kemal are not helping him by encouraging him in his exaggerated nationalism. Five million Turks are in possession of 320,000 square miles, and while Armenia lies fallow and deserted, nearly a million Armenian refugees and exiles are a people without a country. They should tell him that the Turkish problem cannot be solved upon a permanent basis, unless the Armenian problem has been solved upon a fair and equitable basis.

In the matter of the Armenian case, the Armenians do not put any distinction between Russian Armenians and Turkish Armenians. The majority of Russian Armenians are composed of émigrés and refugees from Turkish Armenia and of those who have been incorporated in Russia by conquest since 1828. However, eight battalions of Armenian volunteers, who "took a leading part in the victory" over the Turks in Palestine were Turkish Armenians; so, also, over one-third of those who took over the Caucasus front following the defection of Russia in 1917.

All the Armenians, without Turkey and Russia, claim Wilson Armenia. Naturally, Soviet Russia, of which so-called Soviet Armenia is a member, can make no formal claim. But we know that, just as soon as the Turkish part of the Armenian case has been settled, an agreement between Russia and Armenia, probably along the lines indicated in Secretary Colby's note to the Italian Ambassador, dated August 10, 1920, can be effected.

We realize the predicament of the proponents of the Lausanne Treaty. That Treaty was not negotiated in the interest of the United States of America.

Mr. Hughes said that America could not speak for Armenia—because she had not declared war on Turkey; but he addressed notes to the Powers, demanding a share in Mosul oil—because America had contributed, *indirectly*, toward the winning of the War in the East.

But the blood kin of one hundred thousand Armenian fighting men, who fell in battle on the Eastern front and who contributed, *directly*, to the winning of the War on that front, have no rights!

New York, N. Y. VAHAN CARDASHIAN.

SIR: Mr. Cardashian repels my "insinuations" in regard to the Harding letter, maintains that the Wilson award is independent of the abortive Treaty of Sèvres, and asserts that "the chief basis of Armenia's case against the United States government" is the responsibility of the United States for the delay in the solution of the Turkish problem.

1. The only convincing way for him to repel my "insinuations" is to publish the letter in question.

2. As to the relation of the Wilson award to the Treaty of Sèvres, the records will show that in the preamble of the award the Treaty is specifically cited in connection with the President's action.

3. As to the responsibility for the delay in the solution of the Turkish problem I venture to remind Mr. Cardashian that the German, Austrian and Hungarian settlements, which from the general point of view were far more important than the Turkish settlement, were not completed until June, 1920. Admitting that the delay of the Turkish settlement was due in part to the uncertainty which existed as to whether the United States would eventually be prepared to depart from its traditional policy as regards Near Eastern questions, I am still unable to see that this uncertainty could entail any obligation on the part of the United States toward the Armenians in the absence of anything like a promise to help them. Such a promise most emphatically did not exist. Moreover, even supposing that we were greatly at fault in not making our position clear at an earlier time, it does not follow that we are now under obligation to take the wholly impracticable, ineffective and dangerous action recommended by the American Committee Opposed to the Lausanne Treaty.

Washington, D. C. EDGAR TURLINGTON.

Women as Practical Citizens

SIR: The statement is made that the white race is destroying itself because it will not use its brain in any large, concerted plan to save itself.

I have long seen that the women's organizations of this country have a motif; they call it child welfare but it is really race-survival. They hate instinctively race-destroyers and should some one put before them a great program, all-inclusive, for race-salvation, they would eagerly agree to it.

But the program must be definite: it must mention and expose precisely what are the race-destroyers—war, over-population, child labor, lust, liquor, drugs, disease and greed!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Again it must show clearly that while each of these must be fought locally, each unit do its part, the centre must stand for the common idea. De-centralization will never kill nation-wide evils. Indeed, before the end of the fight, each unit must follow an international ideal, for race-destroyers know no boundaries.

Women, however, have a conservation instinct that makes them capable of massing against race-destruction even should it mean a round-the-world crusade.

But—here is the rub—women do not yet understand the practical steps that must be taken to win. Every great cause has to march to victory through the mud of politics. You have got to choose the candidates who are for race-survival and fight the candidates who are merely for the survival of their particular private business. Women today are political *resolvers* rather than political *do-ers*. They do not want to fight the biggest race-destroyer *greed*.

The men in control of nations today are men who will brook no interference with their vast aggregations of wealth. And the women don't really tackle this domination of private greed, turn it out of the halls of government and put race-survival in its place.

They see the vision but fail in doing practical battle for it—and there we are today. Perhaps, tomorrow will come leadership and with it willingness to take the practical steps.

ELIZABETH TILTON.

Cambridge, Mass.

Literary Criticism in America

SIR: There are at least two reasons why the anonymous survey of contemporary American letters, in your issue of June 30, should not pass unnoticed. First, although the survey has its defects, such as hasty writing and a consequent inaccuracy of statement at critical moments, it is nevertheless the best indictment that has yet appeared of a scene crying for indictment and it provides a suspicion that there is somebody after all who takes ideas seriously. Secondly, it creates the possibility of getting literary values frankly stated and thoroughly investigated.

This second reason, which looks harmless, is really a heresy of the first order. In America I am not aware that the merit of a critic, the following of a novelist, or the art of a poet is ever proposed to an agora of informed opinion and his case probed toward a settlement of the issue which his presence in the scene raises. I take as an instance of this deficiency of our critical procedure, which we share with the English to an extent but which the French cannot understand, Mr. Edmund Wilson's attack on Mr. Untermeyer, in the New Republic for December 2, 1925. I do not wish here to attempt a judgment of the case Mr. Wilson made out; I wish only to point out that at the time it was published the only statement it provoked was Mr. Untermeyer's, and that it was not to be expected that he should tell an unfavorable truth about himself or with propriety assert his merit. But in a milieu which takes literature seriously enough to suspend business, which is at the basis of the complacency your surveyor deprecates, Mr. Wilson's attack would have called forth, say, a dozen letters; all these letters should have been published; and Mr. Untermeyer for all time would have been either removed from power and his opinions universally discredited, or more securely entrenched in his position than before. In short, the issue raised by Mr. Wilson should have been settled. It wasn't; business went on as usual; and Mr. Untermeyer's quality is quite as good or as bad as ever.

Your anonymous critic is obviously a person of ideas, impatient with an order of things of which the situation I have described is typical. The most interesting question which he raises, by implication, he of course could not answer in a survey.

What is the relation between the "generations" of writers who appear in his article? That this is a point of the first importance I need only cite, for convenience, a review in your current issue by Mr. Lewis Mumford. Mr. Mumford is a writer who brings considerable information to bear upon his discussions; he often writes well. But what does he say here? He discusses Art; but when he is done it is obvious that neither Mr. Mumford nor the reader knows what Art is. I take this method of confused, in some cases deliberately obscure, definition to be typical of that criticism advanced by the members of Mr. Mumford's generation, to which, beneath surfaces, such different men as Mr. Canby, Mr. Mencken, Mr. Sherman, and Mr. Van Doren (Carl) belong. They represent a break with their predecessors, Babbitt and More; and Mr. Sherman, for example, who represents the break most significantly because he has made it from the inside, has so thoroughly corrupted his "Puritan rationalism" with romantic humanitarianism that his state of mind cannot now be distinguished from that state of mind which he attacks. Both are confused; and Mr. Sherman ingeniously dodges by writing blurbs for vulgarity if vulgarity somehow makes him like his neighbor better or evinces an interest in the common man. I take the attitude of these critics to be the case of steering a middle course without a helmsman. And the men somewhat younger than they, bored with the infirmity which precipitates them into intellectual suicide and impatient with the bastard romanticism which they mask as "moral values," will likely prove themselves to be more concerned with the ideas of their detached predecessors than with them.

Your critic's survey has another distinction which, in a happier condition of letters, would be quite unequivocal in effect; I mean its anonymity. The recent policy of signed criticism, while it forestalls the more obvious sort of log-rolling, has nevertheless permitted the power of personalities to submerge the authority of ideas: as Mr. Sherman's personal following has increased his critical standards have relaxed. By confession your surveyor is a regular reviewer in the local scene; but since this article is the only exception to the pervasive complacency one can think of, it follows that he is ordinarily as complacent as the rest. His anonymity permits him, as the anonymity of this letter permits its writer, to be equally complacent in the future.

> Thy hand, great Anarch, lets the curtain fall,
> And universal darkness covers all!

AN OBSERVER.

New York, N. Y.

Pepper and Political Prisoners

SIR: Far be it from me to object to any epithets you may deem seemly to apply to any defeated candidate. But has the New Republic so soon forgot that it was Senator Pepper who but lately spent many hours of his own time in working in the interests of a cause which the New Republic had much at heart—namely, the release of the political prisoners? There are many who agree with me that if he had not espoused that cause at once unremunerative and unfashionable their terms of confinement might have been prolonged perhaps indefinitely. He gave to them as sincere and extended a share of his undoubtedly great legal ability as he would have given had their cause represented, as it did not represent, either prestige or financial return.

ANNE HARD.

Washington, D. C.

Let Mr. Billings Do the Washing

SIR: In answer to Mr. Billings Does the Washing, I am moved to retort: "And, pray, why not?" Why should we weep crocodile tears over one or a few Mr. Billings's who merely do what thousands of women do every week as a matter of course? These women not only do the washing, after coming in from a hard day's work, but they also cook, scrub and tend the children.

In regard to the relations between men and women we are still governed largely by habits of thought, rather than by consideration of fair play and justice. If this were not so we should consider it fitting and proper that Mr. Billings, with his presumably better muscle, should do such work as the family wash, a truly muscular job!

EX-FEMINIST.

New York, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Propaganda and Counter-Propaganda

The Genesis of the World War, by Harry Elmer Barnes. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 750 pages. $3.

ONE of the evils of propaganda, and not the least, is that it evokes counter-propaganda. The one is the negative image of the other, substituting dark for light and light for dark; and both alike travesty that cold gray fact which is the truth. Of this general rule the controversy about the origins of the War is a prominent example. The treaty of peace affirmed, and made the Germans sign, the statement that they, and they alone, were responsible for the World War; and this signature is the alleged ground of the terms imposed upon them. But a signature given under threat of starvation cannot alter the facts; and the German historians, ever since their government signed the clause, have been engaged in demonstrating its falsity. In this they have been completely successful. But, since they have been making counter-propaganda, they have gone almost as far from the truth on the one side as their enemies did on the other. This, under the circumstances, was inevitable. An American, one might expect, would be under less temptation to yield to the swing of the pendulum. But it is difficult to uphold an unpopular case without being provoked into exaggeration; and in the book before us Professor Barnes has succumbed to the provocation, partly because he has dwelt but slightly and apologetically on the German misdemeanors, knowing how much they were exaggerated in public opinion, partly because he has blackened the policies of the Entente almost as much as they had blackened those of their enemies.

In a single sentence he sums up his position thus: "The main, in fact the only, direct and immediate responsibility for the general European War falls upon Russia and France," and I think an uninstructed reader of his book would come to the conclusion that England is not far behind these principal criminals. Professor Barnes no doubt is prepared to defend his position, and it is not possible to refute it satisfactorily within the scope of a review, since every point bristles with controversy. I will endeavor, however, to justify what I have said by some definite examples.

Speaking of the invasion of Belgium the author says: "There was no treaty obligation whatever binding England to protect the neutrality of Belgium." This statement is, to say the least, highly controversial. Everything turns on the meaning of the phrase (which Professor Barnes does not cite)—"under the guarantee" of the signatory states. Does this phrase imply a "general" or an "individual" guarantee? That is, was each signatory, individually, bound to act if the neutrality of Belgium were violated, or did the failure of one to act release the others? Lord Loreburn, whom our author cites, took, it would seem, the former view. Messrs. Oakes and Mowatt on the other hand say: "This was not a mere collective undertaking, where the guaranteeing Powers bound themselves to act together as one body. It was an individual obligation imposed by each Power on itself." We have here an example of the general truth that treaties are commonly ambiguous on the most vital points. Sir Edward Grey, it is true, would have gone to war, quite apart from Belgium. But it does not follow that the invasion of Belgium was indifferent to him, any more than it was to the mass of the British people.

Again, referring to the discussions of Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges with the Belgian Chief of the General Staff, Professor Barnes writes: "The British arrived at a determination to land the troops [in Belgium] whether Belgium gave her consent or not." But the Colonel's conversations were obiter dicta of his own, and were never endorsed by the British government. The documents published in the appendix to the Belgian Gray Book make this clear. Or, if Professor Barnes has other evidence, he should say what it is.

Again, in one place, we find the phrase: "The secret agreement to aid France on land and sea in the event of a war with Germany." This made me rub my eyes. Later we read more accurately: "England had bound herself by a verbal agreement to come to the aid of France, if the latter were attacked by Germany." The word "agreement" would certainly be repudiated by Lord Grey. But the important point is the last clause. Everything, in the view of the British government, depended on how the War arose. It is, I think, just to criticize the policy of making great events hang on such ambiguous words as "attack." But the summary statements cited are not really defensible, and will not help the cause Professor Barnes has at heart. As I read his account of Sir Edward Grey I felt that that statesman was being represented as a kind of muddled Macchiavelli. That is not really the author's view. But then, what is? He cites as an "admirable characterization" some words of Doctor Henderson. But the words cited contain two contradictory statements: "He said what he did not mean and meant what he did not say"; and then: "His evident deep emotion, his undoubted earnestness and sincerity, his certainty that he was right, won him the victory." It is hard for a plain man to see how both can be true. I am not aware of holding any brief for or against Lord Grey. But after I had finished reading his Twenty-five Years there came into my mind the line of Wordsworth: "Moving about in worlds not realized." Of his sincerity, of his passionate love of peace and hatred of war, it seemed to me there could be no reasonable doubt, and Professor Barnes has not convinced me of the contrary.

M. Poincaré is another matter. He realized very well the world in which he moved, and it is plausible to say, as many Frenchmen have said, that he willed the War. Nevertheless I believe that psychology to be too simple. Professor Barnes cites, after Mr. John S. Ewart, a speech by the President, made in 1920, in which he said that when he descended from his "metaphysical clouds" he could discover "no other reason why my generation should go on living except for the hope of recovering our lost provinces." I do not know the context, and have not verified the quotation; but it seems consonant with all that is known of M. Poincaré. May we therefore infer that he was deliberately working for war? Hardly! His position was probably this: "Those wicked Germans are determined to have war. We must be ready. And when the war comes (as it will, but without our provoking it), we shall recover Alsace-Lorraine." This is, of course, a most dangerous frame of mind, and every lover of humanity must wish that M. Poincaré had never left the "metaphysical clouds" in which he would, at least, have been harmless. But I see no sufficient evidence that he was determined deliberately to have a world war. His contribution to it was the assurance he had given to Russia that he would back her if she came in. This was analogous to the assurance of the Germans that they would back Austria; and these backings caused the War. But the statesmen on either side were

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

convinced that the backing was their duty, and that, if the worst came to the worst, the responsibility would rest on their opponents.

The Russians were in the same case. Did M. Sazonov "want" the War? Probably not, or not at that moment. But he meant, if it came, to take the Straits; and he was determined not to allow the destruction of Serbia. The Austrians, it will be said, had given assurances on that head. Yes, but who could believe them? We know, indeed, that owing to the opposition of Count Tisza, they had agreed not to annex Serbian territory; but they were contemplating its distribution among the other Balkan states. Again, the Russian mobilization precipitated the War at the last moment. But this did not imply a will to war. It implied fear of the greater preparedness of Germany.

Enough has been said—of necessity with undue brevity—to explain what I mean by "counter-propaganda." I have raised the point, not because I wish to pick a quarrel with Professor Barnes, but because the dust raised by these excursions diverts men's minds from the main point. What matters is not who was "guilty" of the late War, but how we are to avoid another. The belief that the War was due solely to the deliberate wickedness of Germany blocked the way, and Professor Barnes is one of those to whom we are indebted for dispelling the myth. But equally a counter-belief in the wickedness of France and Russia blocks the way. I have endeavored elsewhere to show that either nobody was "guilty," or everybody, and that if guilt is to be imputed its accurate apportionment is impossible, since, in the absence of objective scales wherein the quantities may be weighed, it is national feeling that always determines the verdict. What is true, and true with an urgency men have not begun to perceive, is that civilization itself is at stake; for it can hardly be expected to survive another war. Professor Barnes, as his first chapter shows, is well aware of this. Upon it I think we should all concentrate our efforts; and we shall therefore insist that wars follow inevitably from the international anarchy, whoever is judged to be guilty or innocent.

G. Lowes Dickinson.

Education: The Antidote for Social Disorders

Social Problems and Education, by Ernest R. Groves. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 458 pages. $2.75.

Practical Social Science, by John A. Lapp. New York: The Macmillan Company. 371 pages. $1.60.

SOCIOLOGY and social problems will henceforth be cast in new verbal forms. Time was when nearly all sociologists were environmentalists; they sought the causes and depicted the setting of social problems in social terms. The present fashion dictates a mode of approach which leaves scant room for environmental arguments; the newest sociology is individual, not social, in emphasis. Two disciplines, behaviorism which directs attention to individual behaving organisms, and abnormal psychology which focuses upon the "insane root that takes the reason prisoner" are responsible for this individualizing of the social sciences. Professor Groves was one of the first of the sociologists to scent the changing winds. He began making applications of Freudian psychology to so-called social problems as early, if I recall the occasion accurately, as 1915. And he has now written a text on social problems which is a fair culmination of his psychological interests and preoccupations.

Social Problems and Education might have been named Educational Sociology since its purpose is to indicate how education, especially education of children, might be utilized in forestalling those numerous unadjustments and maladjustments which constitute the sum of social disorder. The conventional concepts are used as chapter-headings—juvenile delinquency, crime, divorce, public health, immigration, et cetera—and statistics are employed in the usual manner to support arguments. The difference between this book and similar texts on social problems lies almost entirely in its psychological foundations. One other distinction deserves mention: the treatment which Professor Groves gives to the theoretical phases of social problems is transfused with a species of delicate though candid liberalism which is seldom found in American textbook writers. Abnormal phenomena seem far less abnormal after passing through the sieve of his fair-minded personality.

The above introductory paragraph may have led readers to conclude that Professor Groves sees only the individual aspects of social problems. This is, patently, the direction in which he (and all others who teach social problems from a psychiatric background) leans. But he does recognize that mental disorders are themselves frequently caused by social situations. He seems to possess unusual insights regarding the importance of social pressures upon children; even his language takes on new lustre in those sections where children are viewed in relation to adult environments.

The faults which textbook form imposes upon all writing of this sort are evident in Professor Groves's book. Lack of sequence, for example: a chapter on illegitimacy is followed by one on settlement-houses. Obviously there is no connection between these two topics and if Professor Groves had been writing a book for the general reader he would not have placed them together. But conventional teachers teaching stereotyped subjects in standardized schools probably deserve the uninteresting texts which prescriptive publishing houses provide. One cannot help hoping, however, that suffering students will some day lead a revolt, not against their teachers, but rather against the commercial publishers who impose upon them books for study which no one would read save under compulsion. And these presumed textbook requirements are probably also responsible for the other outstanding defect of Professor Groves's volume, namely, its lack of distinguishing literary qualities. I wish that Professor Groves would now write another book based upon the same ideas included in the one under observation, but without any thought of publishers, colleges, teachers or students, i. e., if I may use a bit of the psychiatric jargon, without any of the inhibitions which the textbook as a symbol places upon authors.

The sub-title of Practical Social Science—A Laboratory Textbook—is a plain-spoken, straightforward and accurate description of this most useful volume. Professor Lapp wants students to "develop discrimination in the use of social information" and he demonstrates how this may be achieved. Social theory is thrown to the winds; this is a concentrated book of social facts. Incidentally, it seems to me to contain the best selection of statistical information I have ever seen. I do not mean the most complete or exhaustive, but the most selective; Professor Lapp seems to know what it is that figures can do and he simply calls them forth to perform their unadorned tasks. His

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

volume deals with many of the same problems which occupy Professor Groves's attention, but the method is wholly different. Professor Lapp occasionally states a presumption, but only to disprove it with facts. His method is purely statistical, factual. His volume is aimed at high school and not college students, and his purpose is to develop a thirst for concrete facts. It is, I believe, a tool admirably suited to its functions.

EDUARD C. LINDEMAN.

Human, All Too Human

The Story of Philosophy, by Will Durant. New York: Simon and Schuster. 577 pages. $5.

WRITERS of popular technical expositions are engaged in a difficult, thankless task. To be successful, they must wed entertainment with instruction and clarity with brevity; they must be dogmatic yet convincing, thorough but not pedantic, and make a direct contact with common experience. They must combine the knowledge of the scholar with the grace of the essayist, and run the gauntlet of exacting academic criticism and general ignorance and prejudice. The reward is a shout of approval; the fate is eventually oblivion.

Durant has written sixteen pithy essays, which are revisions and expansions of what were originally Haldeman-Julius Blue Books, in which direct quotation and running comment and criticism provide an effective medium for terse outlines of the lives and thoughts of familiar philosophers. A sense of humor, a lucid style and a surety born of familiarity combine to make the Story of Philosophy never ambiguous and always interesting. He is Strachey to the Queen of Sciences. He has made warm blood circulate once more in her cold veins and has penetrated behind her regal grandeur to find the living woman.

On Plato and Voltaire he has written with disarming deftness; he has fought his favorite battles for a place among the philosophic immortals for Bacon, Spencer and Nietzsche; he is among the first to give a popular exposition and criticism of Croce, Santayana and Dewey. It is indeed regrettable that he has not sponsored such neglected thinkers as Bradley and Pierce, who have so profoundly influenced contemporary thought.

Unfortunately his perspective has been seriously distorted and it has been difficult for him to achieve a thorough understanding of the more significant thinkers, due to a tendency to deprecate logic, sneer at metaphysics, exalt psychology and interpret each contribution in terms of the individual's life and epoch. The rationalists suffer most. Spinoza, prince of rationalists, is treated as a psychologist; the Critique of Pure Reason, that logic of metaphysics, is evaluated as a "detailed biology of thought"; Bertrand Russell's epochal Principia Mathematica is dismissed as so much mathematical "moonshine," and the Politics and Ethics of Aristotle are examined to the comparative neglect of his more momentous Organon and Metaphysics. Sociological implications of the different philosophers are emphasized while the logical development and philosophic implications are slighted.

The work is neither thorough nor scholarly. In a book of this size and scope thoroughness, of course, is impossible. Facile literal interpretations and errors of fact limit its value as a dependable volume. It cannot be fairly said that "Locke had written a masterpiece of psychological analysis without so much as mentioning the soul," or that Hume "at the age of twenty-six shocked all Christendom with his highly heretical Treatise." A more careful student would have hesitated to attribute innate notions to Kant, to consider Bacon's conclusions regarding the nature of heat as a contribution to science or to view the Spinozistic diverse attributes of mind and body as one. He would not have criticized Bertrand Russell's Analysis of Matter as not quite living up to its "spacious title"—for it has not yet been published.

A tendency to indulge in romancing has been responsible for the myth of Spinoza's love for Van Ende's twelve year old daughter, for the statement that Spinoza did not dare to publish the Ethics during his lifetime and for the perpetuation of Finot's unsubstantiated story that Schopenhauer had an illegitimate child.

One notes with regret the influence of the "new" psychology on philosophical criticism manifested here in an overweening desire to find psychological bases for philosophic systems and a disinclination to understand philosophy in terms of itself. Comte's affection for Mme. de Vaux "colored his thought and led to a reaction in which he placed feeling above intelligence"; Spinoza was an unsuccessful suitor and "no doubt it was at that moment our hero became a philosopher"; and as for Schopenhauer, "how should a man avoid pessimism who has lived all his life in a boarding house?"

Overlooking his lack of sympathy for metaphysics and logic and forgetting the dogmatic analysis and evaluation of the more abstruse speculations, we have here, especially in the latter portion, a good introduction to philosophy and philosophers. If the reader has not been blinded by the seductive clarity and tone of finality, in what is after all just a genial survey, but has been prompted to turn to original sources, to pursue the subject himself, then the shortcomings of the Story of Philosophy may well be ignored, for it will have accomplished all that any introduction can.

PAUL WEISS.

A Japanese Woman's Autobiography

A Daughter of the Samurai, by Etsu Inagaki Sugimoto. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. 314 pages. $3.

TO be personal is not the function of the reviewer, but as I lay down this charming and touchingly intimate volume, revealing what life has meant to one Japanese woman, I look back ten years to the first time I met Mrs. Sugimoto. It was at Kyoto during the festivities connected with the coronation of the present Emperor. For a short time I shared with Mrs. Sugimoto, her daughters, Hanano-san and Chiyo-san, and an old American friend of hers, an immaculately new and delightful little Japanese house. There were round windows in it, I remember, and a tattered banana-tree in the garden. Mrs. Sugimoto's graceful explanation of everything Japanese from the Noh dances we attended to the tea-ceremony and the complicated symbolism of the coronation rites offered a novice a happy introduction to the old-time loveliness of Kyoto. Temples, festivals, "maple-flower-viewing" at Arashi-yama, were woven into a rich pageantry of memories under the gentle guidance of this Japanese lady who proved to be a veritable "godown" of Samurai history and traditions.

And this daughter of the samurai has all the of her stoic fathers. Perhaps it required e

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

age for her, more than two decades ago, to venture forth alone across a strange continent to meet a fiancé she had never seen and to take her place in an Ohio community where she was the sole Japanese woman, than for her mother to live through the turbulent days of the Restoration—setting fire with her own hands to the ancestral castle, disguising and hiding her children in farm houses and waiting two agonizing years to learn the fate of her husband, who had become a political prisoner. The mother's experience, at least, came within the accepted province of a well disciplined samurai woman. But no one could tell the bewildered Japanese girl what her problems were to be in far-distant America. And no one in America could have the sympathetic background to understand the sinking of heart with which Etsu Inagaki took her place in the carriage beside the man who was to be her husband; for, as she says, "I had never been so close to a man in my life, except my father, and I almost died on that trip."

What a life of contrasts and soul adventures she has had! A long psychological bridge had to be crossed from the honorable grandmother who sealed up the gilded Buddhist shrine against pollution when the household first ate the flesh of animals to the small daughter who celebrated Christmas in the home of friendly "Western Barbarians." There must have been yearnings for the old home in Echigo, where the sidewalks were enclosed like tunnels in the deep winter snow, but she never tells of the lonely aching times. Con spirito she played her own symphony in a new world. That she made devoted American friends and found much to admire in the land of her adoption was due to her own innate generosity of heart and her power of perception to discern the good under the unfamiliar exteriors. When her husband died and she had to return to Japan, she stood up valiantly in the council of her husband's old-fashioned family for the rights of her two little girls, born in America, to an education that would mean wider opportunity in a day of higher freedom. With the dignity and self-effacing restraint of a samurai woman, she met the crisis—and won.

Mrs. Sugimoto has shared her precious family memories with us, and this, too, was brave. But no western woman could have opened her heart with such chaste reluctance. There is a stately measure—a "so far shalt thou go"—to the more tender confidences. One grows aware of the Japanese reticence to discuss subjects that are looked upon as purely personal, and at the same time Mrs. Sugimoto makes her readers see and respond to the environment that has meant so much to her. Very human are the grandmother, who belongs to another time; the father, who is eager to meet the new order of things; Ishi, the adoring nurse; and the priest-teacher, who believed that Spartan discomfort stimulated mental control. One comes unexpectedly close to this Japanese family in the enforced sale, one by one, of the hereditary treasures; the return of the Americanized brother to take his place at the head of the family after the death of the father; the moving Buddhist tribute paid by a Christian daughter to the memory of the mother; and the childish homesickness of little Hanano-san for her American home.

Writing has long been an honored occupation, or at least a pastime, of gifted Japanese women. Centuries ago Murasaki Shikibu, Izumi Shikibu, and the unknown author of the Sarashina diary set a classic tradition in Japan [illegible] writing of memoirs. Mrs. Sugimoto has given a [illegible] age and an alien people a glimpse into her own [illegible] has succeeded in making a record of lasting value of older Japanese ways of thought and conduct. In themselves many traditions are dying out, in the face of the standardizing tendencies of modern civilization. But the finest quality of the book is that it must teach the essentially human aspect of the Japanese, whom Americans in general seldom think of save in political terms. A Daughter of the Samurai to a few may seem oversentimental; to none will it seem trivial. In my opinion it is a notable contribution to biographical literature by women.

ELSIE WEIL.

Walt Whitman

Walt Whitman, by John Bailey. English Men of Letters: New Series. New York: The Macmillan Company. 220 pages. $1.25.

THIS is one of those books that do not call for a review: it can be adequately criticized only by writing another book. Mr. John Bailey's critique of Whitman is as irritating for its praise as for its condemnations; albeit it is a painful attempt to be just and enlightened with respect to Whitman's poetry and his life. Mr. Bailey appreciates the fact that he is face to face with a great poet; he has been caught by Whitman's lyrics, and has not been untouched by the greater poems. Unfortunately, the very roll of language with which Whitman enriched English verse is not among the things that Mr. Bailey has been taught to regard as poetry: he perpetually stumbles against the fact that Whitman did not attempt to carve Milton's mighty line; that he did not, for all the kinship between them, express himself in the lucid sweet measures of Wordsworth; that—alas!—he was not even the equal of Ralph Hodgson. Mr. Bailey clings desperately, for condescension's sake, to the myth that Whitman was a crude, ignorant, unlettered man: oblivious to Whitman's constant intercourse with Shakespeare, Homer and the Bible, he cannot see that Whitman turned aside from the English tradition for a deep inner reason, and not out of a harsh contempt for the best that was thought and written in the past. It is not that Whitman's verse is flawless, or that he lacks cold and dead spots; my antagonism to Mr. Bailey's point of view is based upon his open preference for the regularity of O Pioneers, for example, to the sonorous sweep of the longer poems, which achieve their effect partly through repetition and length, an effect which would be tedious in more regular measures. As for Mr. Bailey's curious notion that Whitman was made by the Civil War, he adduces nothing in favor of this view except his enthusiasm for some of the poems in Drum Taps; whereas it is plain that Whitman was in all essentials molded and rounded out by 1860, when the amplified Leaves were published. Yet, as I said, Mr. Bailey tries to be honest, just, receptive; and, faced with his effort, I can not help thinking that the quality of Whitman's verse is spoiled for him partly through the Oxford and upper-class habit of swallowing vowels, and partly because the English ear is used to a more regular beat. Welsh poetry has the same uneven stresses and intervals as Whitman's; and in reading Whitman to a group of Welsh and English students, I found that the Welsh had no difficulty in feeling the strong rhythmic and emotional quality of Whitman's lines, whereas the English, attuned to Wordsworth and Housman and Kipling, lost the emotional quality altogether, and declared that the "ideas" might better have been expressed in prose. Whitman's thought encounters a similar impediment in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the English mind: his mystic democracy lacks that respect for gradation and rank which is deeply ingrained in the southern English; and even the most painstaking of English critics may forget that the hierarchies of good and bad, inferior and superior, are perhaps conveniences in this world, but not passports to Whitman's heaven, any more than they are to Dostoyevsky's or Tolstoy's. In this respect, as in many others, the deepest American writers are nearer to the thought of the East than they are to their immediate forefathers and contemporaries in Europe.

The Magnificent Idler, by Cameron Rogers. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. 312 pages. $2.50.

ONE wonders what impelled Mr. Cameron Rogers to undertake this study of Walt Whitman. He has turned an epic life into a pedestrian novel; he has transformed the ruddy, sustained language of Whitman's own reminiscences and biographical poems into a prose without salt or savor; he has changed a great character into a small figure. If Mr. Rogers had achieved any purpose of his own in doing this, one might have forgiven him: had he conceived some splendid impudent caricature, had he tried some grand reversal of the commonplace, had he discovered some innate sympathy by which the living Whitman might speak in a register we had neglected heretofore—one or another of these things would have carried off its own degree of reward. The Magnificent Idler, alas! is simply commonplace. Its one effort at verisimilitude, the occasional damning and tohelling of Whitman, is out of character; and for the rest, it reveals nothing, not even Mr. Rogers. After Léon Bazalgette's glowing and hearty biography, this is distinctly a let-down, not exactly a dash of cold water, rather a drink of tepid small beer. Surely, there is no need to humanize Whitman: he speaks for himself, and speaks fully. He was jolly, warm-blooded, vulgar, lofty, diligent and superb: and there is something in him that defies restatement. Sympathetic as Meier-Graefe's biography of Van Gogh was, one would exchange its two magnificent volumes for a handful of Van Gogh's own letters. So of Whitman. A good biography would be no equivalent for what the man himself has left us; and a poor biography scarcely has the value of a souvenir.

Two Prefaces, by Walt Whitman, with an Introductory Note by Christopher Morley. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. 67 pages. $1.

WALT WHITMAN'S original Preface to Leaves of Grass, with all later omissions restored, and his preface to November Boughs, when, in the fullness of maturity he looked back upon his achievement, and appraised it with that judgment, so even of keel, so certain of its destination, that he applied once and again to his contemporaries—these two prefaces are happily brought together in a convenient little book. One breath of Walt himself sends all the commentaries kiting: his amplitude, his sanity, and his large self-discipline, which those who are used to more mincing movements look upon as a sprawl—even as a canvas of Rubens must seem a sprawl beside that of a tidy Dutch interior. The notion that Whitman attempted to cut loose from the past should not survive a reading of these prefaces: he was not afraid of the past and did not want to destroy it: he left all the established figures in literature standing in place, and nonchalantly put his own great bulk in the foreground of them all. "If he does not pose superior models and prove himself by every step he takes he [the poet] is not wanted." Whitman was ready to have his own work stand or fall by this criterion; and I think it stands. It remains to say that such tough and knotty and juicy prose as Whitman wrote, in his all too few prose pieces, is one of the genuine glories of American literature: that such prose or such criticism should ever have been obscured by the suave trivialities of a Lowell or a Holmes is sufficient proof of the tremendous indictment against his contemporaries that Whitman thundered in his Democratic Vistas. "You grow six inches high," exclaimed the heroine of Henry Adams's novel, Democracy, "and then you stop. Why will not somebody grow to be a tree and cast a shadow?" Whitman grew into a great tree; and we today are only beginning to realize how far that shadow spreads!

LEWIS MUMFORD.

Halide Edib, Heroine

The Memoirs of Halide Edib. New York: The Century Company. 472 pages. $4.

THE publishers, in their blurb, have taken a wrong tack in calling Halide Edib "the Jane Addams of Turkey." For the fiery Turkish novelist and journalist, bright star of the Young Turk movement, and mounted warrior in Kemal Pasha's nationalist army, is in many ways the exact antithesis of the great American leader and conciliator. Both are widely known women, and both have worked for children, but there the two part, contrasts in temperament and talent.

Once the publisher is forgiven for this undiscerning steer, the Memoirs of Halide Edib is an absorbing book, or rather half a book, for the Memoirs are not completed, and bring the reader only from the heroine's childhood in a Turkish garden, in the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid, down through the Great War. Of her career under Kemal Pasha, her quarrel with him and her departure for England to write her memoirs and to regain her health nothing is told though all is foreshadowed.

There is no other book that gives so much of the last forty years on the Bosphorus, poetically described and felt, historically recorded. Yet the book is not the history of the last forty years. The passionate child peeping through wisteria vines to where stone lions spout water into a fountain, growing up in the pain and confusion of the households of a father who chooses western education for his daughter and practices the eastern plural marriages for himself, even in her patriotism can never release herself from an intensely personal view of the social forces round her. The lady and the patriot, the blue-stocking learned in the Moslem classics and graduate of the Christian college for women, is always a person of prerogatives. Her position in the Young Turk movement was unique. She was absorbed in her marriage to the elderly scholar Salih Zeki Bey and in her children when in 1908, holidaying in Antigone, came news of the granting of the constitution, a complete surprise to her. In the general enthusiasm and rebirth of her country, Halide Edib became a writer. She produced the literary columns of the Young Turk paper, Tanine. But she was a radiant star, celebrating events, not one of the earth forces that made the social and political movement that has not yet come to equilibrium in the Near East. Even the stars were not safe in the next summer, and she fled with her children to Egypt to avoid the massacres that bloodied the Bosphorus.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Her return, her observations on the causes of the Balkan war, her personal crisis when her husband took a second wife under the Moslem law, her decision to divorce him, her career as teacher of history, and story writer, her account of Turkish entry into the Great War, of her task of building up schools and orphan asylums in Syria, of her second marriage—these things are told with a packed style, now summary of events, now exquisite picture of a moment. The Memoirs of Halide Edib are a rare combination of moving revelation of human personality, and intimate chronicle of significant time. E. E.

A New Oasis

Not Poppy, by Virginia Moore. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 190 pages. $1.75.

YOUNG poets in their first zeal often make the mistake of including too much that has been merely experimentation, and Miss Moore would have done well if she had more carefully winnowed the grain. In the present volume there are included some two dozen poems which should have remained in the limbo of college magazine files.

Miss Moore's poems seem to fall into three groups—those of the field-roving child, carefree and ecstatic, in which the lyric note is pure and unrestrained; second, the transition period, the half-way state between childhood and maturity; and third, that of the woman with a sophisticated disillusion, and a sureness of grasp, both of technique and emotions.

It is in the second period that most of Miss Moore's faults appear, technical errors in anti-climax, doubtful rhythm, careless use of assonance; and a somewhat strained note of hopeless despair in minor keyed themes which deal with the ugliness of death, the terror of the beast marriage, the withering of spring beauty, the inevitable flaw in perfect love. But even in the less happy achievements, there is no hackneyed poeticism and no rhetoric. Miss Moore is original, notwithstanding an echo of Millay, and also quite modern with a modernity that is unaffected, and intelligible as well as intelligent. Her forms and patterns too are varied and again and again she delights her reader with the utter surprise of her rhyme.

It is in the sonnets of her more mature period, however, that she particularly excels and here their grace and spirit escape the limitations of their construction.

I

I know your body is compact and fleet,
I know your mind cuts clean, a rapier light
Stabbing the mawkish and the incomplete;
I see with what a swagger you unite
Pity and arrogance, with what finesse
You lap your tongue in silver for a lie
So gorgeously untrue, I acquiesce;
I feel the drama of your careful sigh.
And yet I do not love you. Men less strong
In sense and savor and heroic swank
Confuse my breath and tempt a latent song
Into my throat, while you whose virtues clank
So noisily, a tin and gilded sword,
Leave me, after the coffee, faintly bored.

VII

Now you will never know the genuine me;
My spirit's blood and bone, essential beat,
Color and core and gristle, utterly,
That might today be prostrate at your feet
In excess of love. Now you will never hear
The intimate words I kept with iron keys
For slow cathedral hours when I kneeled near
My passionate small head against your knees.

But it is safer that you think me this
Poor bloodless woman who am windy-wild
With wide capacity for holding bliss:
Think of me, always, as a curious child,
Not quite as chilling as an April ghost,
But certainly more circumspect than most.

In the latter, under her well bred and sensitive reserve, one feels the smoldering fire which reaches its dramatic intensity in St. Theresa, her most ambitious poem, and this dramatic quality is to me the most promising of Miss Moore's rare gifts. HUDSON STRODE.

Innocent Birds, by T. F. Powys. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

INNOCENT BIRDS is an attenuated study in village puritanism, revolving about the intrigues of a crabbed but will-to-power individual who "bites her bacon and Mr. Tucker." Mr. Tucker, the preacher, and the two servant girls who are her other victims are, however, interesting on their own account, for even in this his weakest novel T. F. Powys excels with simple folk. The unruffled Mr. Solly, who reads his History of America and awaits a vision on Madder Hill for twenty years, is an even more delightful if less important person. Indeed, this aptitude for rustic and whimsical characterization, fortified, it is true, by a singularly clever and ultra-modern style, is the only redeeming feature of a novel whose story fails to interest, whose lesson does not impress and which can boast of only an inconsiderable portion of the author's generally superb village naturalism. J. W. G.

Keller's Anna Ruth, by Elsie Singmaster. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.

ADMIRERS of Elsie Singmaster's mellow art will be disappointed by this commonplace novel. The skill with which characters and situation are presented, the careful reticence of style, the strength and delicacy of draughtsmanship, only serve to emphasize a trite and sentimental story. One can only hope that Miss Singmaster's genre pictures of Pennsylvania may return to their former vigorous composition and sturdy structure. D. B. W.

Contributors

EUNICE FULLER BARNARD writes on historical subjects for various periodicals.

DONALD R. MURPHY is managing editor of Wallace's Farmer, Des Moines, Iowa.

EVELYN GERSTEIN is motion picture editor and assistant musical and dramatic reviewer of the Boston Herald.

G. LOWES DICKINSON, English writer, is the author of The Choice Before Us, The European Anarchy, The Magic Flute, and many other books.

PAUL WEISS contributes articles to philosophical journals.

ELSIE WEIL was formerly managing editor of Asia.

LEWIS MUMFORD is the author of The Story of Utopias, and Sticks and Stones.

HUDSON STRODE, author of many short stories, is Professor of Dramatic Literature in the University of Alabama.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED